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BBC Television presents a new drama serial transmitting prime-time on BBC-1, three times a week

Created by Tony Holland from an idea by John Dark and Verity Lambert, and produced by Julia Smith

A Cinema Verity / J D & T Production for BBC-tv

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"A coast of golden dreams and deep, dark secrets..."



1

Welcome to *Eldorado*: a coast of golden dreams and deep, dark secrets; a world of hedonism, hope and heartbreak — and the sun-drenched setting for BBC-1's new three times a week drama serial.

Created by Tony Holland from an idea by John Dark and Verity Lambert, and produced by Julia Smith, *Eldorado* follows the fortunes of a community of ex-patriates living in southern Spain.

The production, being made for the BBC by leading independent Cinema Verity, is one of the most ambitious in British television history. *Eldorado* is shot entirely on location in Spain, centred on a spectacular 25-acre production village which has been specially built in the rugged mountains above Malaga, near the town of Coin.

Its residents have come to the very edge of Europe from all four corners of the Continent. A multi-lingual melting pot of Brits and Spaniards, Scandinavians, Germans and French, they are divided by culture and united by a common pursuit — the search for a new life in the sunshine Shangri-La that is *Eldorado*.

Their motives for moving here are as diverse as the accents they speak in. For some *Eldorado* simply offers relief and a future far from the greyness of

home. For others it is a refuge, a community living for the present, and caring little about the past.

Together they all face the same question. Can life here live up to the fabled promise of the Spanish City of Gold? Or will their dreams wither and die in the searing Spanish heat?



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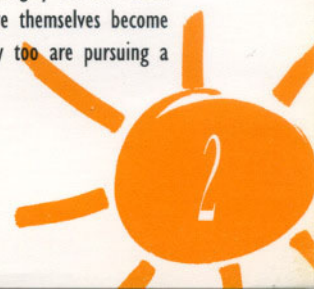
For the creators of *Eldorado*, the challenge of charting these lives is the most exciting they have yet faced — not least because those lives so eloquently mirror their own ambitions under the Andalusian sun.

Along with the cast and largely British crew, Julia Smith and Tony Holland have themselves become virtual exiles from England. They too are pursuing a dream.



3

1. Part of the spectacular production village: Urbanizacion Las Terrazas
2. Producer Julia Smith
3. Creator Tony Holland



"A multi-lingual melting pot divided by culture and united by a common pursuit"

"This series is about people who have been brave enough to uproot themselves. They have got up and done something for themselves, as we have with this programme," explains Smith, winner of the coveted Desmond Davis award for outstanding contribution to popular drama at the 1988 BAFTAs.

"We too have a dream and we have come down here to make that dream come true," she adds.

BBC-TV's *EastEnders*, created by Smith and Holland, revolutionised popular drama and it is their intention to repeat the process with *Eldorado*.

Glamorous locations and ground-breaking new approaches to shooting have been combined to create a series unlike anything so far seen on British television. And the series will move at a pace in keeping with the climate and culture of Spain.



"I want people back in Britain to feel the wind through their hair. It will also move at a much gentler pace than we are used to. Life is not frenetic out here and the programme will reflect that."

"They are pursuing a dream"



"It is going to have a totally different look. I think at this time when England is very grey and sad and tired what I want to do is take TV technically forward and at the same time give people blue skies, brown bodies, greenery, wind and sea. This is going to be something that is a pleasure to look at," she says.

1. The Fernandez family home in the Old Town, Los Barcos
2. On the first floor of the shopping plaza, Loc Barcos Centro Comercial
3. Outside Freddie, Olive and Trish's apartments in Las Terrazas

"It is a wonderful combination of strange bedfellows"

For Tony Holland, the essence of *Eldorado* is escapism of another kind.

"Everybody has a secret, and everybody is running away from something," he says of the 30-strong cast of characters that will inhabit *Eldorado*.

"They are all trying to find this mythical world, the question is 'does it exist?'," adds the writer, who immersed himself in the real life communities of the Costa del Sol in his search for authenticity.

His storylines will reflect the hedonistic realities of the lifestyles he discovered. *Eldorado's* days and nights will be devoted to sun, sand, sangria — and, of course, sex.

"If you are an ex-pat, living here is about filling time. You can fill it by joining Conservatives Abroad, by joining the poetry society, with amateur dramatics or alcohol," he says.

"1992 is the year of Spain and the year of Europe, and the British are not the only people here. We have been true to that and we have characters from different European countries," explains Julia Smith.

"The characters are from different cultures and different classes, it is a wonderful combination of strange bedfellows," she adds.

Along with Smith, Holland, Verity Lambert, head of Cinema Verity, her co-producers John Dark and James Todesco, and line producer David Shanks, those strange bedfellows have been drawn to the Costa del Sol by a remarkable vision.

And now, on the coast of dreams, they are bringing that vision to vivid life — as the citizens of *Eldorado*.

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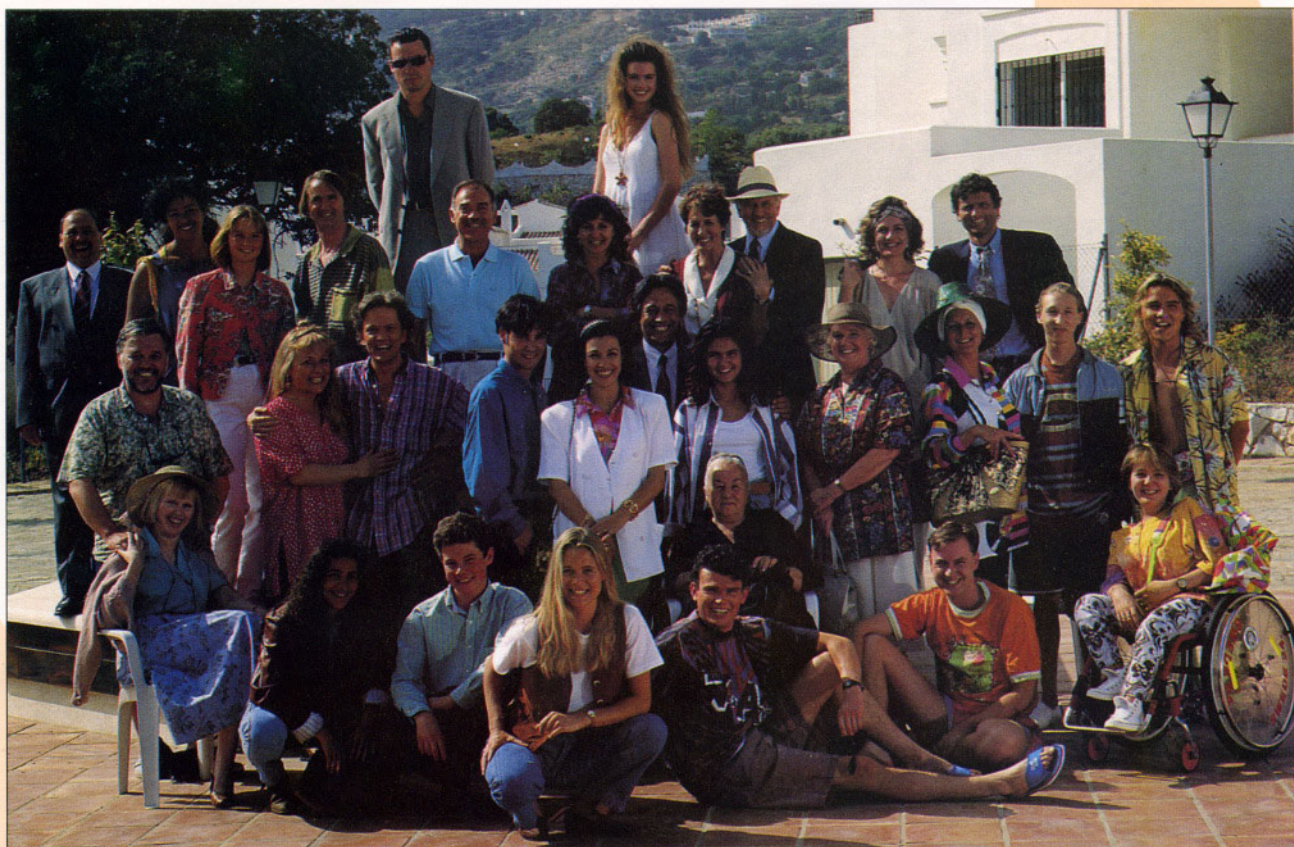


The duo have brought together a pan-European cast, from six countries. Established names well known to British viewers have been blended with complete newcomers from as far afield as Copenhagen, Paris and Barcelona.

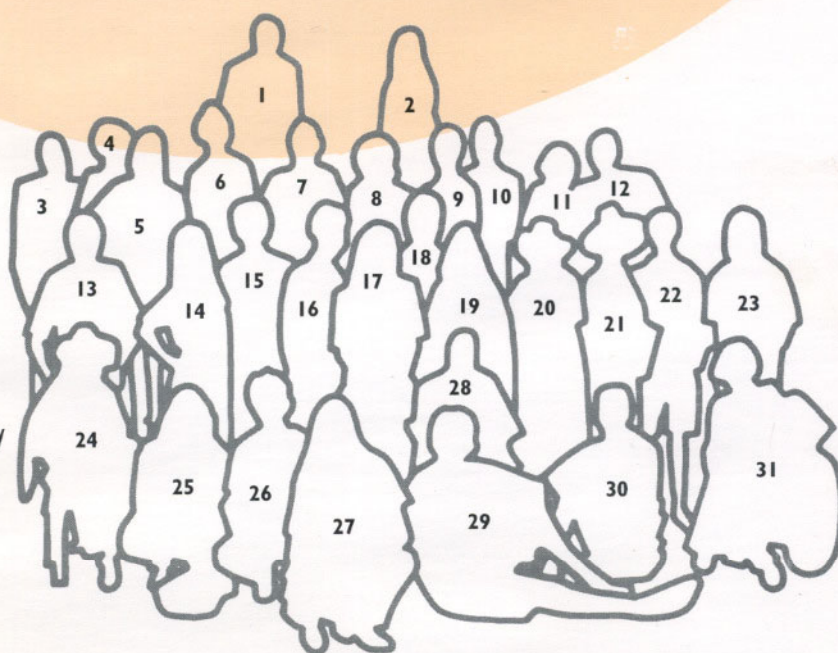
1. Dieter (Kai Maurer) teaches windsurfing...
2. The church stands at the highest point of Los Barcos
3. Marcus (Jesse Birdsall) at the marina on the Costa Eldorado
4. The shopping plaza - Centro Comercial - at Los Barcos

REGULAR EL DORADO CAST

"Everyone has a secret, and everyone is running away from something"



- 1 Jesse Birdsall
- 2 Kathy Pitkin
- 3 Roger Walker
- 4 Buki Armstrong
- 5 Marchell Betak
- 6 Patch Connolly
- 7 Roland Curram
- 8 Leslee Udwin
- 9 Hilary Crane
- 10 William Lucas
- 11 Framboise Gommendy
- 12 Daniel Lombart
- 13 Campbell Morrison
- 14 Nanna Moller
- 15 Kim Romer
- 16 Iker Ibanez



- 17 Stella Maris
- 18 Franco Rey
- 19 Maria Sanchez
- 20 Faith Kent
- 21 Polly Perkins
- 22 Josh Nathan
- 23 Kai Maurer
- 24 Patricia Brake
- 25 Sandra Sandri
- 26 Mikael Philippe
- 27 Bo Corre
- 28 Maria Vega
- 29 Jon Morrey
- 30 Darren Newton
- 31 Julie Fernandez

Next pages - where the characters live...

THE COSTA ELDORADO

Your guide to the sun-drenched coastline



ELDORADO



Gwen & Drew Lockhead



Nessa & Blair Lockhead



High in the rugged mountains above Malaga on Spain's Costa del Sol, near the town of Coin, is the spectacular 25-acre production village which has been specially built for BBC-1's new three times a week drama serial, *Eldorado*.

Produced for BBC Television by Cinema Verity and J D & T, *Eldorado* unites the talents of producer Julia Smith and creator Tony Holland — the team behind *EastEnders* — to bring this ambitious drama project to the screen.

Building began on 7 January 1992 with a team of nearly 200 local construction workers and craftsmen, under head of construction Pepe Tomas Sanchez, working to designs created by Keith Harris. There are no "backlot sets" or studios. All scenes are recorded in the production village buildings, or, outside, using two mobile outside-broadcast units. *Eldorado* also uses other locations on the Costa del Sol, including a marina and beach, a tennis club and a riding stables. The first episodes were recorded in May 1992.

The production village is made up of the Las Terrazas Urbanization — apartments and villas round a swimming pool; Los Barcos — the old town, with the church dominating the Plaza; and the Los Barcos Centro Comercial — the shopping centre. The site also includes production offices, editing and dubbing facilities, a staff restaurant called "Auntie", make-up, wardrobe and technical departments and artists dressing rooms.



Allan Hindle Gavin Hindle



Joy Slater



First Floor

Ground Floor

First Floor



Stanley Webb



Rosemary Webb

Ground Floor



Snowy



Bunny



Fizz



Freddie Gerry



Trish



Dieter



Olive King



The Leduc Family



The Fernandez Family

Los Barcos Centro Comercial

GROUND FLOOR
Marcus' Video Shop
Drew's Shop
Cafe
Supermercado
Hairdressers

FIRST FLOOR
Banco de Jerez
Restaurante Giorgio's
Scandinavian Clinic
Pizzeria
Joy's Bar

URBANIZACION Las Terrazas

OLD TOWN Los Barcos

Pottery Shop
Posteleria
Office Supplies
Cafe
Bank
Newspaper Shop
Estate Agent

Police Station
Mens Designer Shop
Farmacia
Travel Shop
Sport Shop



Church



The Svendsen Family



Ingrid

First Floor

Doctors Surgery

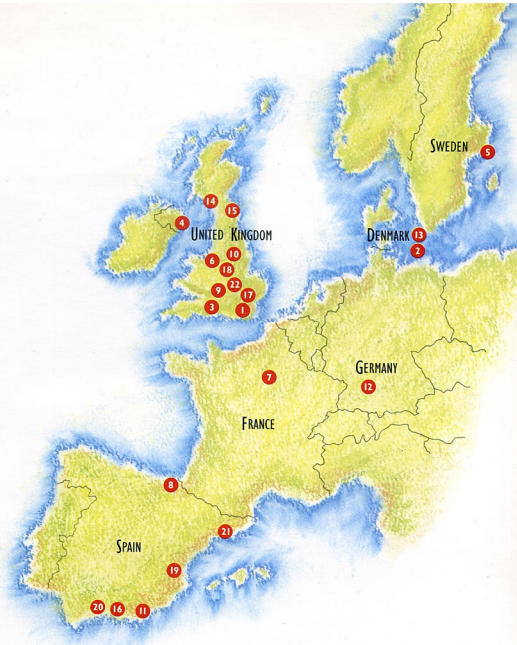
Scandinavian Church



Marcus Pilar



Marcus Pilar



European Connections

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Gerry: Burt Armstrong, London | 11 Dieter Schult: Kai Maurer, Stuttgart, Germany |
| 2 Vini Svendsen: Marchelt Betsch, Havnred, Denmark | 12 Lena Svendsen: Hanna Weller, Copenhagen, Denmark |
| 3 Hanne Indy: Allan Hinder, London | 13 Allan Hinder: Jon Morrey, Middlesbrough |
| 4 Owen Lockhead: Patricia Drake, Bath | 14 Drew Lockhead: Campbell Morrison, Glasgow |
| 5 Snowy: Patch Connolly, County Down | 15 Josh Nathan: London |
| 6 Ingrid: Bie Cerve, Stockholm, Sweden | 16 Darren Newton: Northumberland |
| 7 Roland Curran: London | 17 Robb Valence: Costa del Sol |
| 8 Julie Fernandez: Essex | 18 Paddy Phillips: Berkshire |
| 9 Franckie Gommendy: Paris, France | 19 Kathy Piskin: Sheffield |
| 10 Javier Fernandez: San Sebastian, Spain | 20 Roberto Fernandez: Valencia, Spain |
| 11 Kim Rimmer: Copenhagen, Denmark | 21 Per Sandhu: Copenhagen, Denmark |
| 12 Olive King: Haverford | 22 Maria Sanchez: Malaga, Spain |
| 13 Felipe Leduc: Paris, France | 23 Sandra Sanchez: Barcelona, Spain |
| 14 William Lucas: Manchester | 24 Joy Slater: London |
| 15 Rosita Fernandez: Southern Spain | 25 Roger Walker, Derbyshire |

FLIGHT INTO THE UNKNOWN

"The truth is that we just didn't know what was going to happen"



1

As they filed along the aisles of Iberia's Viva Air flight FV163 to Malaga on 23 April 1992, few passengers paid any attention to the tight-knit group gathered at the front of the plane.

If they had they would have seen on the faces of the cosmopolitan collection — among them a stunning Manchester model, a coolly beautiful Swedish actress, a dashing handsome Spaniard and a sprinkling of respected British screen and stage stars — a melting pot of emotions.



2

And as the aircraft climbed into the steely, grey skies they would have seen those expressions transformed into a poignant blend of laughter and tears.

For each and every one of them, this was a Flight Into The Unknown. The cast of the BBC's new £10 million "super-soap" *Eldorado* will never make such a journey again.

The next time they board a plane every step will be greeted with a nudge, a wink and a wave of an autograph book. And when they next touch down in Britain, they will all be household names.

By then millions will have watched them in a show that is designed to send a citrus-scented breeze through the nation's living rooms.

"There were a lot of tears shed"

Julia Smith and Tony Holland — the most successful team in TV soap — created *EastEnders* and revolutionised broadcasting with its irresistible mix of home-spun, East London reality and controversial story-lines.

Now the same duo are turning television on its head once more with a three times a week cocktail of sun, sea, sangria and sex.

The cast members of *Eldorado* have descended on the sun-drenched Costa del Sol coastline in Southern Spain. It is there, on the most ambitious TV set ever built, high in the mountains near the remote market town of Coin, that they have been recording the BBC's biggest-ever drama project. And it is there that those who become the stars of the show may be making their homes for years to come.



3

23 April 1992 — in flight and on arrival . . .

1. Roger Walker (Bunny)
2. Buki Armstrong (Gerry) and Franco Rey (Dr Roberto Fernandez) with his treasured Chelsea FC cap
3. Faith Kent (Olive King), Bo Corre (Ingrid), William Lucas (Stanley Webb)

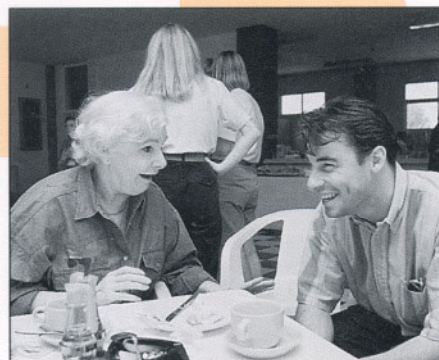
FLIGHT INTO THE UNKNOWN

"Excitement at being part of TV history...sadness at leaving family and friends"

For some of the 30 regular cast members the journey to the spectacular *Eldorado* set — a vast reconstruction of an entire Spanish village among 25-acres of pungent pine forest — was a short one. A handful of the cast already have their homes on the Costa del Sol. For others it was a marathon trek by land, sea and air from cities as far-flung as London, Paris and Copenhagen.

*"200 workmen have
toiled around
the clock"*

But as those who made the two-and-a-half hour flight from London confirmed, no matter how they made their way to a land many had never seen before, the feelings were similar.



Campbell will have plenty in common with the ex-patriates he finds in the community that is to become his home. For more than 20 years the Costa del Sol has been a magnet for Britons like him, people in pursuit of dreams.

For more than 750,000 each year it is the destination for a fortnight-long escape from the mundane routine of everyday life. But for around 250,000 it is a permanent refuge.

For some of the cast, it must seem like a dream. Kathy Pitkin, not yet 17, was sworn to secrecy when she was given one of the most important roles in the serial. Already poised to become one of the most successful young models in Britain, she was snapped up by producer Julia Smith to become the show's sexiest star, Fizz.

"It will take a long time to sink in. I couldn't believe it when they told me

that I had got the job," said the brunette beauty who travelled down to Spain with her father Terry, a theatre stage manager from Manchester. "It is an incredible opportunity, but I will miss my friends and family," she added.

Pitkin is one of a string of complete unknowns chosen by the producers. Others include Darren Newton and Jon Morrey, two young actors from the North East who run a beach bar, and stunning Spanish actress Sandra Sandri, who plays Pilar Moreno, destined to fall in love with the highly dubious Marcus Tandy.

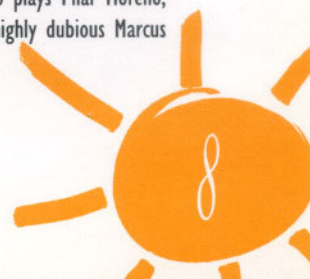


Excitement at being part of TV history, the thrill of a well-paid job in the sun, but the sadness of leaving families and friends at home — months of separation that would test even the strongest of relationships.

"There were a lot of tears shed," remembered Campbell Morrison, who plays father-of-two Drew Lockhead. "It was the beginning of a journey into the unknown for all of us. The truth is that we just didn't know what was going to happen. We still don't know how the show will be received and how long we will be in Spain."

24 April 1992 — All the cast meet one another for the first time . . .

1. Faith Kent (Olive King) and Jesse Birdsall (Marcus Tandy) in Mi Tia — Aunt's restaurant
2. Julia Smith shows them around the production village, still under construction



FLIGHT INTO THE UNKNOWN

A remote mountainside, transformed into a sprawling Spanish village

The producer-writer team has laced the cast with some familiar faces from TV and film. Handsome *Wish You Were Here* and *Rides* actor Jesse Birdsall portrays the programme's most roguish character, Marcus Tandy — a heart-breaker. *Porridge* star Patricia Brake, Buki Armstrong from *South of the Border* and *Black Beauty* veteran William Lucas are among the other established screen faces that figure in *Eldorado*.

become their workplace. As they picked their way through cement mixers, diggers and pile-drivers, Ducados-smoking builders grinned at the actors for whom all their hard work had been intended.

And even though, when they arrived in April, the air was thick with smoke and dust, oil-barrels filled with what should have been their drives and paint was still



1

There is also a sprinkling of stars from the continent. French actors Daniel Lombart and Framboise Gommendy play a sophisticated Parisian couple, while Danish actors Kim Romer and Nanna Moller fly the flag for Scandinavian talent along with Swedish blonde, Bo Corre, who plays tempting tour-guide Ingrid.

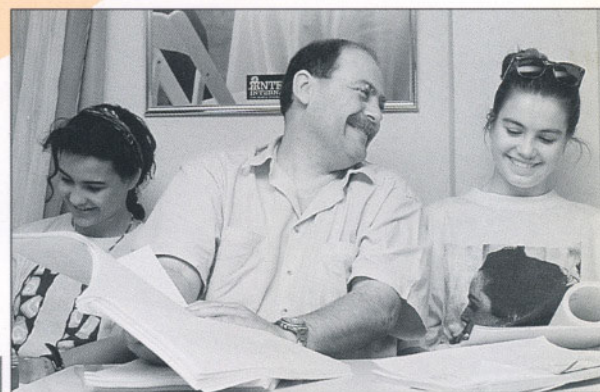
splattered over their patio windows, everyone admitted to being overwhelmed at the sight that greeted them.

"It's amazing, isn't it," said Jesse Birdsall, as he pored over the plans and looked down on the scene. "You just have to admire the bravery of it all."

In the space of just five months a remote mountainside, previously only known to locals as La Montana del Viento — The Mountain of the Wind — has been transformed into a sprawling Spanish village, now dubbed by locals El Milagro — The Miracle.

Two hundred workmen from the nearby village of Coin have toiled around the clock since January to build a complex of white-washed apartments and villas complete with swimming pool, a two-storey shopping plaza, petrol station, theatre, police station, restaurant, and an old-style Spanish village with a church which dominates the town square.

There, on 24 April, Julia Smith and executive producer Verity Lambert gave the cast their first guided tour of the remarkable creation that will



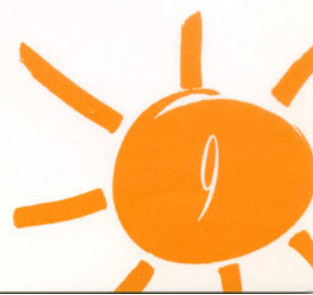
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2

27 April 1992 — First read-through . . .

1. Creator Tony Holland with Franco Rey (Roberto), Campbell Morrison (Drew), Kim Romer (Per)
2. William Lucas (Stanley Webb) and Hilary Crane (Rosemary Webb)
3. Sandra Sandri (Pilar Moreno), Roger Walker (Bunny), Kathy Pitkin (Fizz)



JULIA SMITH

SERIES PRODUCER

"This was too big to miss, too big a challenge not to be involved in"

The words were dropped casually into the conversation, but their effect was explosive.

"Someone said very casually one day that the new serial would be going out three times a week rather than twice. Tony Holland and I just said 'forget it then, we don't want to know, we are resigning'," remembers Julia Smith.

Since they had first become involved with *Eldorado*, Julia and her creative partner Tony Holland had been concentrating on a bi-weekly soap.

"When they told us that they wanted half as much again our

involved in the development of a major serial of its kind again. Yet here they are tackling an even more demanding task.

"After I left *EastEnders*, I didn't think I would ever consider getting tangled up in something like this again. But this was too big to miss, too big a challenge not to be involved in," says Julia.

The duo were approached by Cinema Verity after the BBC had asked the independent company for a new, early evening serial to complement *EastEnders*.

When it was agreed to go ahead with the idea of a soap set amongst the ex-pats of Spain, Julia and Tony Holland began combing the Costas for a community with the right ingredients. Holland eventually found such a community at a development called Calahonda, just outside Fuengirola on the Costa del Sol.

The community of *Eldorado* reflects life as it is lived on such an urbanization. "There are people of all ages and all classes. It really is a crazy

melting pot, you can have well-off people from the prosperous south east living next door to a couple of lads from Hull who have no money and an Anglo-Scottish family who are bringing their family up in Spain," she said.

"And as well as having people from different parts of the British Isles you have the strong European element as well," enthuses Julia.

"They are following their dreams, but for some the dreams have already turned into a nightmare and they have instead found themselves trapped, unable to get back to their own country," she adds.

Julia was determined that the serial should have a strong European flavour and has recruited cast members from all over the Continent.

"They will speak their own languages when appropriate, just like when they are at home, and there will be no sub-titling," she said.

"They find themselves trapped, unable to get back to their own country"

initial reaction was that it was not possible," she explains.

After that first rush of blood, however, Julia took a fresh view — and began looking at three shows a week as

a challenge rather than a threat.

"I started thinking about how we would do a show that we would not be ashamed of and that would allow us to be innovative," she says.

She struck on the idea of using two teams of directors and allowing each team a fortnight rather than a week to film episodes. "That way directors would have more time to think and we could also maintain the standards and use the types of locations and shooting styles that we wanted," she says.

After their triumph in creating the phenomenally successful *EastEnders* for BBC Television, both Smith and Holland doubted whether they would ever become



JULIA SMITH

SERIES PRODUCER

"They will speak their own languages when appropriate, just like at home"



Since she first established herself as one of the leading creative forces within British television more than 30 years ago, Julia has consistently set new standards.

She first worked with Tony Holland back in the mid-60s on *Z Cars*. Since then they have created such successes as *Angels* and *District Nurse*.

She believes their partnership works because they are at once alike and unlike each other. "In many ways we are totally different, I am probably more practical and he is more Quixotic. But we both have mercurial minds and we both have the ability to think on our feet, which is something we will have to do on *Eldorado*."

"We also have total faith in each other and total trust in each other. I think that more than anything makes it work," she adds.

Julia admits that creating *Eldorado* has been a physically punishing process. "There is an absolute degree of stamina needed. I gave up four years of my life for *EastEnders* and swore I would never do it again. Yet here I am again," she says.

"I don't see *Eldorado* as my swansong. It is simply the latest challenge that I have accepted. I don't think I will ever be able to resist a challenge," she says.

"I was determined to have a strong European flavour"



1. Julia Smith (centre) with lighting director Bill Minto (left) and production designer Keith Harris
2. Julia Smith (left) with executive producers Verity Lambert (Cinema Verity) and John Dark (J D & T)

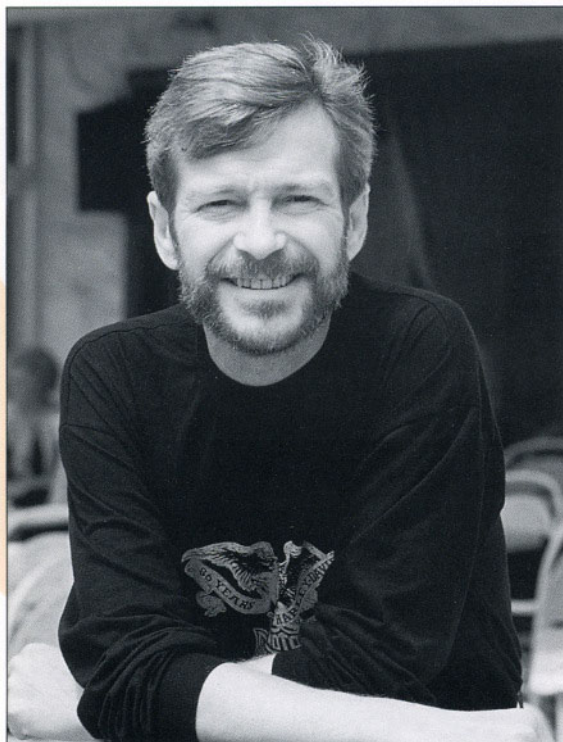
TONY HOLLAND

CREATOR AND STORYLINER

Calahonda - "my favourite place in the world"

The supermarket and cafe-bar in the shopping complex at Calahonda on the Costa del Sol is Tony Holland's "favourite place in the world" and is the inspiration for the *Eldorado* shopping plaza.

It was after finding the complex that firm ideas for a drama serial set in Spain sprang to life. Before that, Tony had been shown picture postcard villages and prim and proper new urbanizations — that Riviera touch. There wasn't a serial in those places and he told Verity Lambert and Julia Smith that it was "all off".



*"We sat in the
cafe-bar and watched
all the nationalities
pass by"*

But he returned to Spain a little later to visit friends and asked them to drive him around. Then he found what he was looking for, in Calahonda. "We were driving along, when suddenly there appeared this Moorish-Tudor edifice, and I said

'Stop!'. It was Calahonda — and I knew this was it."

They stopped, sat in the cafe-bar by the check-out points of the supermarket, and watched the life of the ex-pat Brits and other nationalities pass by. Upstairs in the complex, he discovered the Dickens pub which inspired Joy's bar in *Eldorado*.

"The Dickens pub was run by a Glaswegian. We got talking and eventually I plucked up the courage to ask him why he had come to the South of Spain. He told me 'Isn't it everyone's dream to open a bar on the Costa del Sol?' and I thought — you've got a series here.

"I had the shopping plaza, the bar, and when I looked over the balcony behind, there was the urbanization." Tony used his favourite square in the old town of Fuengirola as the model for Los Barcos — the remains of the fishing village, now the old town, in *Eldorado*.

Tony said that part of his inspiration had originally come from a visit to Marjorca. "I was there three years ago and I found this area, and thought 'My God, this is the world encapsulated in five square feet'. It was marvellous — every nationality was there, the North-South divide, the lot.

"I stored it in the back of my head." Then about a year ago, he got a call from Verity Lambert. Among other ideas for a serial, she suggested one set in Spain.

He gave her five pages of script called 'Little England'. It was then that he started his search in

Spain, and eventually found Calahonda. "The characters have been buzzing around in my head for a year. They make up the history of Britain over the past 70 years, and then there are also the French, Spanish, Danes, Swedes and Germans."

*"My God, this is the
world encapsulated in
five square feet"*

TONY HOLLAND

CREATOR AND STORYLINER

There's no meeting place like the Queen Vic - you can meet anywhere



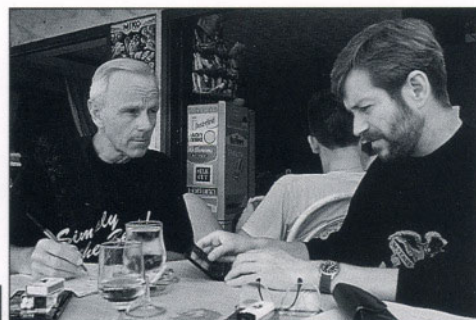
1. Julia Smith and Tony Holland (centre) talk to Kim Romer (Per Svendsen) at the first read-through on 27 April 1992.

2. Script editor John Maynard (left) and Tony Holland discuss storylines in Fuengirola. The other script editor is Alison Davis.

As the co-creator of *EastEnders*, he fears that comparisons will be drawn with other TV serials. But this show is totally different to anything else. "You can't draw comparisons" — you can't say, is Joy's bar the new Queen Vic or Rovers Return — is Joy the new Bet Lynch or Angie — who is the new Dirty Den?

"There's no main meeting place like the Queen Vic because the weather is so good most of the time you can meet anywhere — in the street, in the shopping plaza, Joy's bar, the beach bar or the bar in the old town."

Julia and Tony teamed up for the first time on *Z Cars* and met again when she was asked to take over *Angels*, re-vamp the programme and turn it into a twice-weekly serial. Their association continued when Julia moved on to *District Nurse*. They teamed up again when Jonathan Powell asked them to make a new twice-weekly serial for BBCtv — and they refused. "We were still talking and Jonathan casually mentioned 'what about that bend in the River Thames?'. *EastEnders* was born."



Verity Lambert

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, CINEMA VERITY

"It worked out to be less expensive and more practical to start from scratch"

Four years ago Verity Lambert and her co-executive producer John Dark dreamt up an idea for an international drama series set on Spain's Costa del Sol, a setting that already boasted a cosmopolitan community including a large number of ex-patriate Brits.

The idea for a drama based in Europe came, and was then tucked away as her company, Cinema Verity, concentrated on other projects — until the BBC announced that it was setting up its biggest-ever outside production and would be commissioning an independent company to make a popular drama programme to replace Terry Wogan's three times a week chat show.



"In 1991, Cinema Verity won the biggest-ever commission for an independent producer"

Verity Lambert went to top drama serial team Julia Smith and Tony Holland with her idea. The concept for a new serial with an international cast was put forward to the BBC, and Tony Holland provided a "bible" — the industry term for a full synopsis of plots, characters and locations. Julia Smith's experience was used to determine how such a massive project could be mounted. By Christmas 1991, Cinema Verity had won the biggest-ever commission for an independent producer.

But having won, Verity found herself with a formidable challenge: produce a thrice-weekly programme on the Costa del Sol, and have it up and running for transmission in the summer of 1992.

"Time was the great enemy," said Verity. "By chance, John Dark and his partner James Todesco had been having discussions in Spain about setting up a film studio complex in the mountains behind Fuengirola on the Costa del Sol.

"At the time we were faced with two possibilities — either to move into a partly-built development on the coast, or create an entire production village of our own. It worked out to be less expensive and more practical to start from scratch. So John and James' studio plans became our *Eldorado*."

"We got the construction work under way and then we had to find a cast of more than 30 from throughout Europe. We managed that in just ten weeks. We were breaking new ground — producing another "first" for television. It has been a massive undertaking."

Verity Lambert's career has encompassed enduring drama series such as *Rock Follies*, *Minder*, *Flame Trees of Thika*, *Rumpole of the Bailey*, *Widows*, *Reilly — Ace of Spies* and *Edward and Mrs Simpson*. As director of productions at Thorn EMI she was responsible for the films *Morons From Outer Space*, *Restless Natives*, *Dreamchild* and *Clockwise*.

She founded her own company, Cinema Verity, in 1985 and produced the film *A Cry In The Dark*, starring Meryl Streep and Sam Neill. Among the television series her company has made are four series of the situation comedy *May to December* for BBC-tv, *Coasting* (Granada), the award-winning Alan Bleasdale drama *GBH* (Channel 4), *Sleepers* (BBC-tv) and two series of *The Boys From The Bush* (BBC-tv).

for John Dark y James Todesco Producciones SL, Cinema Verity's co-producers in Spain

The town of Coin, high in the mountains above Fuengirola, was suffering 65% unemployment until the BBC threw it a lifeline and built *Eldorado* in a nearby pine forest, creating a new economy for the area.

That happened because John Dark and James Todesco had a dream to build a studio complex on a steep hillside near Coin, and the BBC needed a Spanish location for its new drama serial.

They formed a partnership with Cinema Verity, which had won the independent contract from the BBC to make the new serial and, as a result, injected new life and new money into the town of Coin. Built in just five months, the *Eldorado* village has earned the name *El Milagro* from the local population — which means, *The Miracle*.

Talking about the partnership with Cinema Verity, John Dark said, "Four years ago I went to see Verity Lambert at Elstree studios. I didn't know much about television because I make films. But I said to her I thought there was a great television series to be made about the Costa del Sol. With 1992 in view, it was a mirror of the future."

"Then I met my future partner James Todesco who had an agreement to licence 250 acres of land near Coin. At the same time Verity talked to me about putting up a series idea about the Costa del Sol to the BBC."

They met up with Julia Smith and Tony Holland and started searching for a location in the south of Spain. "There were plenty of half finished possibilities — left incomplete by the recession. Then we went to see the land near Coin and it was agreed that we should build the set and facilities ourselves," said John, who has lived in the area for nearly eight years.

John and James had a small studio in nearby Mijas and work started as soon as production designer Keith Harris came on board.

"We got some flak from one British newspaper which thought we were not looking after the ecology, but in fact we went to great lengths to make sure we did nothing wrong. The Spanish have very tough ecology laws.

"We used all local labour — they are tough, talented and they are grafters. As they kept telling us — 'we are doing this for our children's future.'"

Verity Lambert's Cinema Verity and John Dark and James Todesco's JD&T are equal production partners in *Eldorado*. "Verity is the British side and we are the Spanish side," said John. Partner James Todesco had nothing but praise for the BBC's role in commissioning the new serial and being "gutsy" enough to make the drama in the south of Spain.

"By its decision, the BBC has given Coin a huge injection of life. It has boosted the economy and provided employment. It is a very welcome invasion."

When building started, there was no water on the site and there could have been problems about the village being a fire risk. But one day James was out in the woods with the local contractor, Jose Tomas Sanchez, who is no mean hand at water divining. "Suddenly he said he felt there could be water nearby and he picked up a twig. He gave it to me and nothing happened — but when he held it, the thing went crazy.

"I thought no more about it because we weren't going to drill on the land. Then I got a phone call from Jose saying he'd drilled a bore hole. I thought, 'Oh no!' and then he added that they had found a huge underground lake with the purest water ever found in these parts. We couldn't believe it — water is supposed to run down hills, not stay in them! But it solved all our problems and the find seemed like a go-ahead for *Eldorado* from above.

One of the few British independent film producers, John Dark has a film pedigree which goes back many years. Among his numerous film credits are *Half A Sixpence*, *There's A Girl In My Soup*, *The Land That Time Forgot*, *Shirley Valentine* starring Pauline Collins and *Stepping Out* with Liza Minnelli.



James Todesco (left) and John Dark

DAVID SHANKS

LINE PRODUCER

"I had no hesitation in accepting an offer to be part of the team"

David Shanks has learnt every aspect of television, from his professional beginnings as a floor manager to running his own production company.

His involvement with *Eldorado* as line producer, began with a 'phone call from Julia Smith. "I'd barely stepped off the plane from Australia where I'd been filming *Boys From The Bush*, when I was contacted by Julia Smith about the *Eldorado* project," said David. "I was so infected by her enthusiasm that

I had no hesitation in accepting an offer to be part of the team."

Educated in London, David joined the BBC in 1972 but has been self-employed since 1978. He cut his teeth working as a floor manager and first assistant director in current affairs, light entertainment, drama and sport. He first worked with Verity Lambert when he was Location Manager on the enormously successful *Minder*.



David shifted into production management where his credits include *Worzel Gummidge*, *Woman of Substance* and, for Humphrey Barclay, *Relative Strangers* and *Never Say Die*.

David has a strong track record in comedy. As associate producer for Humphrey Barclay, he worked on the situation comedies *Surgical Spirit* and *Desmonds*, as well as *Behaving Badly*. Other sitcom credits include *Stone Age*, *Des Res* and *Ten Glorious Years*, a satirical resume of ten years of Maggie Thatcher.

He also has a flair for opera, acting as associate producer on Limehouse Production's *Rape of Lucretia* and as producer when his own company filmed Placido Domingo in *Il Trovatore* at the Royal Opera House for network transmission.

His recent association with Cinema Verity started with budgeting various situation comedies (including *May To December* which is now in its fourth series) and then setting up and acting as production supervisor on the drama series *Coasting*.



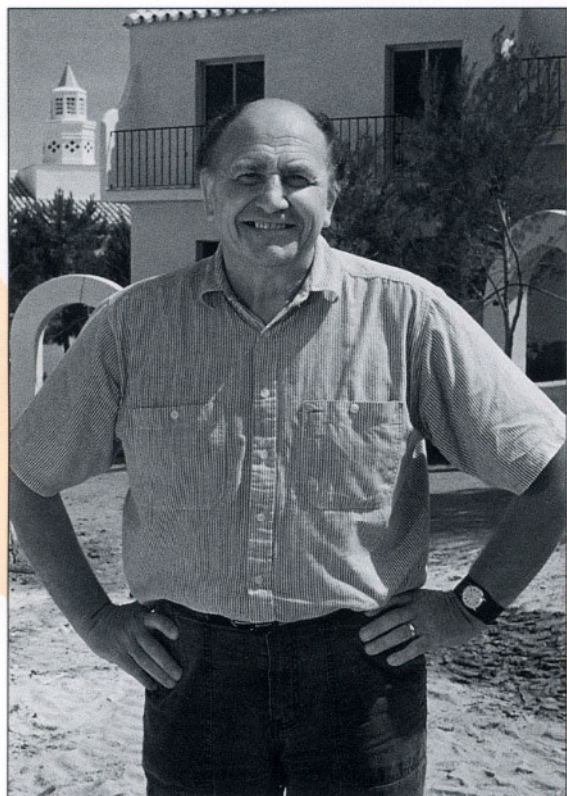
Head of construction Jose Tomas Sanchez, from Coin, standing by the well with his divining sticks. He used them to locate the largest underground lake in the area, which supplies the *Eldorado* production village with all the fresh water it needs.

KEITH HARRIS

SERIES PRODUCTION DESIGNER

"We took eight months to complete Albert Square, and five months for Eldorado"

The *Eldorado* village was brought to life by Keith Harris, the man who created Albert Square for *EastEnders*. Building *Eldorado* was a far greater challenge because, as Keith put it, time was the great enemy. "We took eight months to build Albert Square at Elstree and that was mostly batten and hardboard, plus the inside studio sets. With *Eldorado* we were set incredible deadlines. It still baffles me how we did it. Luckily there were no real problems — if there had been, the village wouldn't be here today."



Keith's task was enormous. Clear part of a hillside pine forest near the town of Coin, in the mountains above Fuengirola, and build a Spanish village —

and new villas and apartments. So really, this is a bit of knitting." They walked into the forest, put in some stakes and the diggers and bulldozers moved in. "I am conservation conscious so we kept as many trees as we could," said Keith. In any case, the pines are planted commercially and are regularly chopped down for their wood and replaced, and the BBC has replanted two trees for every tree taken down on the site.

"Once cleared, the site was much steeper than we first thought so we had to do a lot of cutting and in-filling. That's why there are so many terraces — but that's good because they give more camera angles." Underneath the site is another 'village' — a huge network of miles of cable for more than 30 camera plug-in points, which means that cameras are totally mobile.

"We decided this would be a local project with the town of Coin"

The foundations were laid on January 7, 1992 and the village — complete with every shop and house having its own water and electricity supply — was ready for filming to start in mid-May. "We used to be set designers," said Keith. "With this one, we've become civil engineers!"

complete with old town, new urbanization and a shopping plaza. And have it ready for filming in just five months.

His previous credits include designing sets for the Miss World and Miss UK contests, the BAFTA awards, and numerous BBC-tv drama and music programmes. "I did Shackleton in Norway and Amundsen in Greenland. I usually get the cold ones!" It won't be cold in *Eldorado* this summer. The temperature can hit over 100 degrees (40°C).

"From the start we decided that this would be a local project with the town of Coin. So we used local labour — up to 200 craftsmen and builders working all hours to complete the work. They were amazing — nothing was too much trouble for them."

Keith started the project in 1991 with a model of what he thought was needed and then redesigned it after visiting the site in November. With a team of three assisting him, 180 detailed drawings were produced — the plans for *Eldorado*.

"I had no preconceived ideas of what a Spanish village should look like, but I knew it had to have the three basic ingredients — old town, shopping plaza

Keith designed the *EastEnders* Albert Square backlot and studio sets and spent the last five years working with the programme at BBC Television's Elstree Centre.

THE BUILDERS OF "EL MILAGRO"

The construction workers and craftsmen who created a local miracle

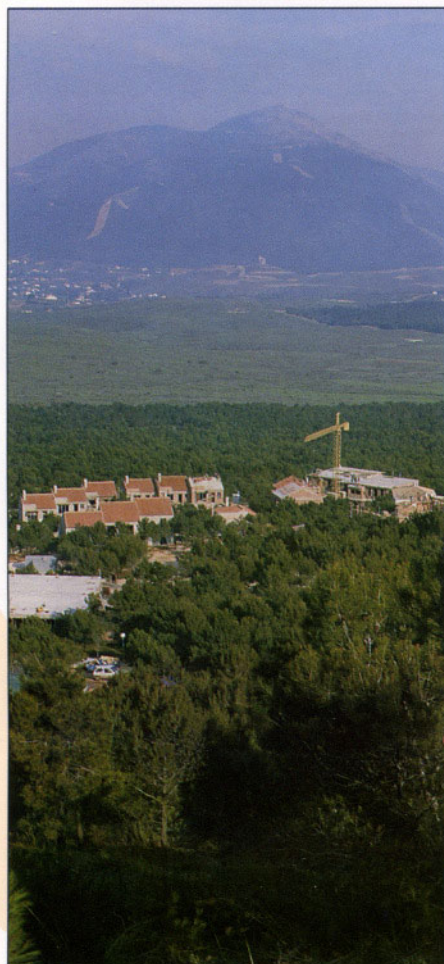


Previously only known to locals as La Montana del Viento — The Mountain of the Wind — it is now dubbed El Milagro — The Miracle.

Production designer Keith Harris (seated, front) with Julia Smith and his art department team of Andrew Ackland-Snow (left), Ann Williams and Neil Lamont.

LAS TERRAZAS *El dorado* *UNDER* *CONSTRUCTION*

The Urbanization takes shape...



Above: View from La Montana del Viento



Above: 20 April 1992 - aerial view just 15 weeks after construction started...



Keith Harris created the design for the most ambitious TV set ever built, seen here in model form...the real thing is above



Las Terrazas Urbanization - apartments and villas surround the swimming pool. Completed mid-May 1992



Above: The villa for Bunny & Fizz, in February 1992



Above: Apartments at Las Terrazas a month after construction started

BUILDING Eldorado LOS BARCOS

The Old Town...in just five months



January 1992



February 1992



March 1992



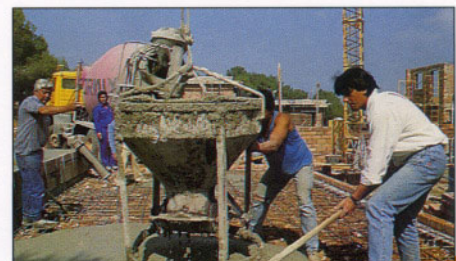
Aerial view of the Old Town - Los Barcos - on 20 April 1992, 15 weeks after construction began. Above are shots of the same site in earlier months...



Plaza de Los Barcos after completion at the end of May, 1992. The Fernandez family and Marcus Tandy live in this square, dominated by the impressive church



The shopping plaza - Centro Comercial



Thousands of square yards of concrete were poured to build Eldorado...

Buki Armstrong

AS GERRY

A big black rebel - who used to gut fish in Iceland

Born in Paddington, London, Buki attended the Central School of Speech and Drama. She worked with several ensemble companies, including Nancy Meckler's company. Buki's credits include a tour with the musical, *One Mo' Time*, and appearances in versions of Brecht's *Baal* and *The Merchant of Venice*. In 1987 she starred with Glenda Jackson in the film *Business As Usual*.

Buki's work for television includes playing Candy in the BBC's *Shalom Salaam*, and a starring role in two series of *South of the Border* (BBC).



"It's a great act of faith . . . and a great opportunity"

In 1989, in between the two runs of *South of the Border*, Buki spent three months travelling through India. Prior to taking up her part in *Eldorado*, she has guested on Channel 4's *Drop The Dead Donkey* and appeared as Bethany Edwards in

A Masculine Ending (BBC) in February 1992.

Buki's talents also lie on the other side of the camera. She has written a short film and is currently writing a feature film. "I like to write my own role," she explains.

When offered the part of beach bum Gerry, Buki admits, "I was a bit shellshocked. It's a great opportunity and it's good to be in at the beginning. It's a great act of faith — not seeing a script or knowing much about the character — a bit like throwing yourself in at the deep end!"

Although Buki isn't exactly like her character, she is kind and caring like Gerry. "I like her character," says Buki, "She's an outsider." Gerry is a close friend of Freddie, played by Roland Curram, and they make an unlikely pair.

Buki, who has two brothers and a sister who is a dancer, admits to being "very work orientated". Her ambition is to excel in both her acting and writing careers. "I'm excited by new projects. I find them a big adventure," she says.

Her interests consist of pottery, dancing and listening to all types of music. She also likes travelling. She has visited Greece, Mexico, India, France, Italy and Spain. "I

love Greece and have started to learn the language," she says, "Now I'm in Spain I'm really keen to speak Spanish."

MARCHELL BETAK

AS TRINE SVENDSEN

A dishy little Dane

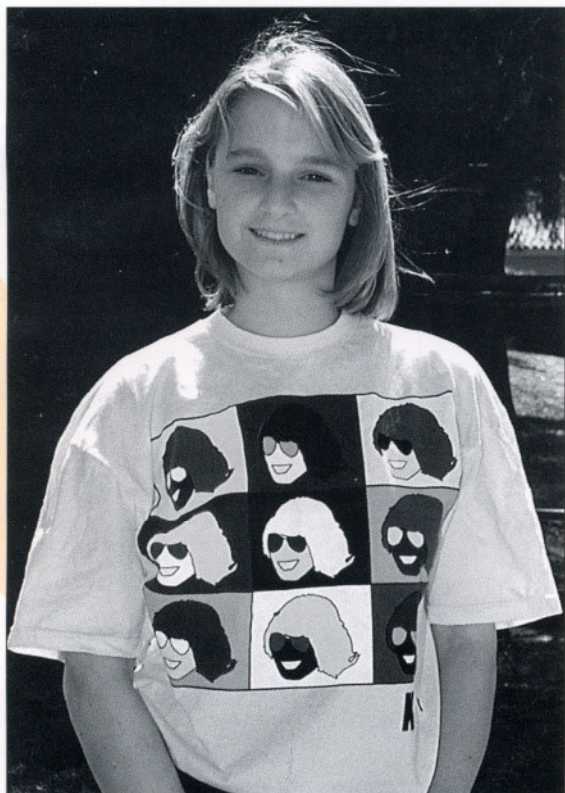
Marchell, 14, was born in Naestved, Denmark. She and her family moved to Spain in 1992. Marchell attends school in Fuengirola on the Costa del Sol where she studies maths, sport, drawing, art, modelling, history, nature, English and Spanish language.

Marchell is the same age as her screen character Trine, Danish daughter of Per and Lene Svendsen (played by Kim Romer and Nanna Moller). She also shares Trine's great love of sport. Marchell's favourite pastimes include playing volleyball, swimming and horseriding. She

Marchell heard about the search for the young Danish girl in *Eldorado* from the Danish Club in Spain. She knew that there were many young Danes in for the part and admits, "I was so excited to be chosen. My parents are very happy and my friends are thrilled for me."

Her mother is a drama school teacher in Denmark and Marchell has four sisters — two older than her and two who are younger.

Her other leisure pursuits involve visiting friends' houses and going to the cinema. And Marchell's future ambitions? If she doesn't carry on with acting, she would like to become a vet.



*"If I don't carry on
with acting,
I'd like to be a vet"*

took part in several drama plays at school, appearing in various guises — as a tramp, an old lady, and even as an octopus!

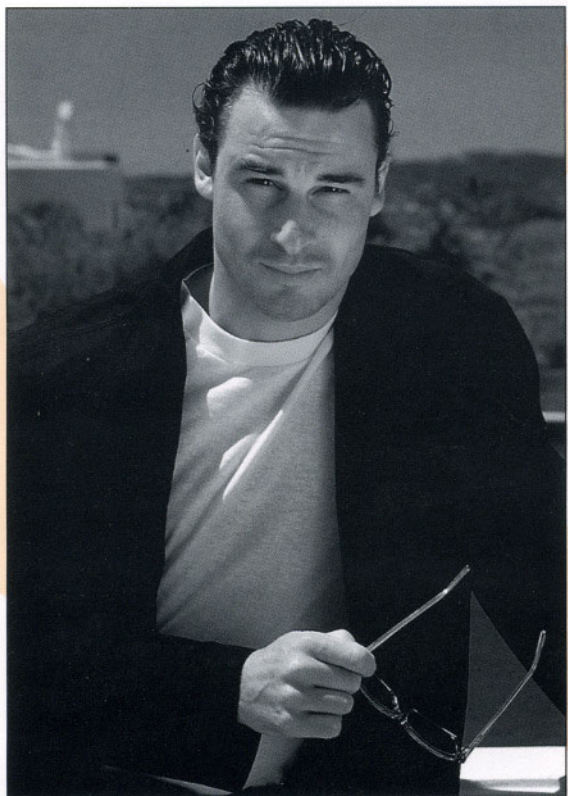
JESSE BIRDSALL

AS MARCUS TANDY

...stick around...

Jesse Birdsall plays Marcus Tandy, a man with a past. And it's a role that suits London-born Jesse.

"I like the part very much — it's always good to play a baddie and this bloke's a right b....." About his character he said, "Marcus is from Southend and he's been involved in some dubious dealings. He's made plenty of money selling dodgy property and has been involved in fraud so he's had to do a bunk. He chose the south of Spain to escape the reach of the law. But is he safe?"



In the opening episodes he's already under scrutiny — from

"It's always good to play a baddie and this bloke's a right b..."

a TV programme. "He gets a visit from a sort of Cook Report programme which is investigating his activities," said Jesse. He said the character is cool, charming and polite but there is an underlying air of menace. "He wouldn't beat you up if you crossed him. But he would run you over!"

He owns the video shop and has bought an interest in the local riding school and is due to fall for one of his employees — the lovely Pilar (played by Sandra Sandri), who has run away to the south from her strict Spanish upbringing.

Jesse started his acting career when he was 13 at the Anna Sher dramatic school in Islington and he landed a part in the RSC's production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Aldwych Theatre. "Bits and pieces" followed until he started getting bigger roles. He played the lead man in *Getting It Right* and other film credits include *Quadrophenia*, *Bloody Kids* and *Revolution*. He was Emily Lloyd's boyfriend in *Wish You Were Here*.

His first break in television came when he starred in ITV's three-parter, *Annika*, about a Swedish girl and an English boy. Other TVs followed including *The Fear*, in which he played Monty — one of his favourite parts, and *Rides* for the BBC in 1992.

Quitting Britain to move to Spain wasn't a wrench for him. "At the moment it's like being on holiday, but I think that will soon change. Of course, leaving the old country is a bit of a problem, but you have to go where the work is. Not wanting to move isn't a good enough reason for turning down a job."

Patricia Brake

AS GWEN LOCKHEAD

Mother Earth...

Patricia Brake quit her starring role in the hit West End show *Don't Dress For Dinner* when she was offered the part of Gwen in *Eldorado*. "This business is all or nothing," she said. "One minute my name is up in lights in the West End and the next minute I quit a hit show for a new series for which nobody had even seen a script!"

But she made the decision because she had known about the project for some time and she knew the people involved. "I didn't believe it would happen until I met them and now I can't believe what has happened. It's amazing."



"This business is all or nothing"

When I walked into the village for the first time, it was an extraordinary feeling. Taking the decision to accept the role was not easy because I have a daughter at home taking 'A' levels. But as she is going on to university and will be away anyway, we decided I should go ahead.

"I suppose I gave up the West End for the security of *Eldorado*. West End productions don't last, and I think that this was the right time to opt for some security. And it's not that far to go home — I think I'll be using the airplane like a bus!"

She plays Gwen Lockhead, married to a difficult husband, Drew (played by Campbell Morrison) with a problem son, Blair (Josh Nathan), and a disabled daughter, Nessa (Julie Fernandez), who is wheelchair bound.

"I tend to play character parts, but Gwen isn't that. She's nice, busy and the rock on which the family is built. She's very straightforward and runs the local English speaking newspaper. But she has a lot to cope with."

"The family came out here for a holiday and liked it so much they decided to return later and settle down here — not like me at all. If anyone had told me I would be moving out here to live I'd have said 'no way'. But here we are."

Patricia started acting when she left school and starred in the TV soap opera *Home Tonight* on ITV, playing the 15-year-old daughter. But the show was killed off

by the actors' strike. She went into rep, including work for the RSC, but then her TV career took off when she played Ronnie Barker's daughter in *Porridge*.

"That started to get my name known and I went on to other TV work including *Forget Me Not*, *Trouble and Strife*, *Man's Best Friend* with Fulton McKay for ITV, *Second Time Around* with Michael Craig and *2.4 Children*. She was in the BBC's *Campion* series and achieved a personal ambition when she appeared in the penultimate series of the *Morecambe and Wise* show and danced the closing scene with Eric Morecambe."

She was at Chichester for the theatre festival last year and has starred in three Derek Nimmo company world tours, doing *Don't Dress For Dinner*, Alan Ayckbourn's *Bedroom Farce* and *My Fat Friend* with John Inman.

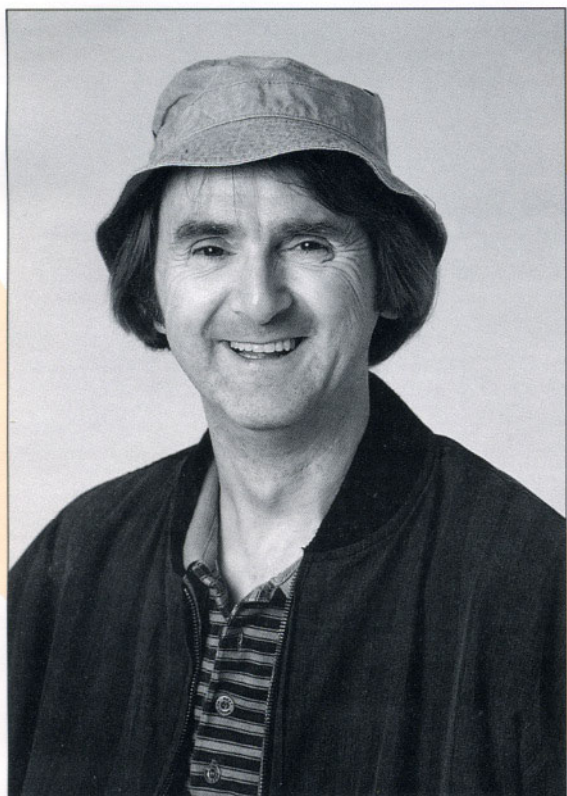
Patch Connolly

AS SNOWY (WHITE)

A red nose - who's Hamlet underneath

Eldorado has given Patch Connolly his first big television break in a 21-year career spent mostly in repertory theatre and holiday camps. And he admitted, "After all those years of touring the back of beyond, this is quite a giant lift for me."

He plays Snowy, the local village handyman who does all the little odd jobs for the local population. "He's a great observer of life. He loves to gossip, and I love him - he's a great character to play."



Patch has had to learn to ride a motorbike for the part of Snowy - who is famous in the

"Snowy's a great observer of life, he loves to gossip"

community for tearing everywhere - but nowhere - on the bike and making people laugh. He is a great clown but underneath he is hiding a great tragedy.

Patch said, "I couldn't believe it when I got the part. I have never been to Spain before and I am still in a state of shock and wonderment. People take things for granted but I know how lucky I am. I hope to repay the audience with a show that can make them forget their troubles for a long while."

Patch was an abandoned baby in Dublin and was taken in by the Sisters of Charity. "In those days people used to come along and take the children in. One day a couple in their 50s came along and I said to them - 'Please take me' - and they did. I went home with them and my adopted sister was horrified - she wanted a sister!"

"But they were all wonderful. They lived in Warrenpoint, my adopted mum and dad, and never stopped arguing but they were a perfect couple and had been married for nearly 60 years. They were very stable, it was a happy background." He left Warrenpoint in 1964 and worked for the Belfast Telegraph for two years as a copy-taker.

"I wanted to act but I didn't know how to go about it so I just came to England and tried my luck."

He couldn't find acting parts so he worked on a building site to pay for his upkeep while he went to night-school to learn the acting profession. In 1968 he took a play he had written about Warrenpoint in the 1930s back to the town, and had it performed.

At the same time he saw a job advertisement in England for a holiday camp entertainer. "I rang up and transferred the charge and asked for the job. I was told that anyone prepared to

do that should be seen and I got the job."

After the holiday camp he joined a puppet theatre in Wolverhampton and then went to an Irish classic theatre group, called the Greenfields and Faraway Company. "I was earning £55 a week while 15 of us toured in a minibus. I played all the cranks and eccentrics."

During his 21 years on the road, Patch has consistently returned to the holiday camp where he started - on the Isle of Sheppey. "It's a specialised camp catering for the mentally and physically disabled and I was the regular compere. They are wonderful people and it's great fun to do."

FIRST LINE

"You've got some visitors"

BO CORRE

AS INGRID

She's Swedish!

Bo Corre learned her acting trade in London and New York. She plays Ingrid, her first major television role.

After leaving school in Sweden she was a hair stylist — but her great loves were dancing, singing, films and the theatre, so she decided on a new career direction. She left Sweden to go to New York to study drama, and spent two years there, taking acting roles as well. Then she came to England to continue

her drama studies, living in London for the past three years.

She joined the Arts Threshold company

About her role as Ingrid, she said, "I am very excited. My profession is like a journey — always jumping into new parts and meeting new people. It's wonderful."

"Ingrid is a tour guide for an international travel company, who lives in the old town. She is very fit, healthy, lives life and her Spanish boyfriend is Javier Fernandez (played by Iker Ibanez), the son of the local doctor."

The mountain setting of *Eldorado* will suit superfit Bo down to the ground — her hobbies include rock climbing and trekking. She also enjoys pottery and reading, and takes yoga and fitness classes. "I am a fitness fanatic and I work hard at it. It's a way of living and it's good for the acting. It helps to keep mentally, as well as physically, in tune."

"I am a fitness fanatic and I work hard at it"

in Paddington, playing Calpurnia in *Julius Caesar*, among other roles, and has just finished her first feature film, *Soulscapes*, in which she plays a beautiful temptress.



ISSUE 1: JULY 1992 BBC TV DRAMA PUBLICATION

HILARY CRANE

AS ROSEMARY WEBB

She's 60, going on 16, and ought to be in the Golden Girls

Hilary Crane played Tucker's mother in the long-running children's serial, *Grange Hill* on BBC-TV and also in the follow-up series, *Tucker's Luck*. She was appearing on stage at Cheltenham in *A Child In The Forest* when she was seen by a casting director and was offered the role of Rosemary in *Eldorado*.

"It was the biggest decision I have ever had to take in my acting career and it was a decision that had to be taken very quickly. It was too good an opportunity to miss.

"But I must admit that after making the decision I was scared. I wanted to do it but it

"I play a very sensual woman, which I am looking forward to as I have played so many mothers in the past. It's good to get away from that. I want to be the Elsie Tanner or Joan Collins of *Eldorado*."

Hilary started her career as a ballet dancer with the Royal Ballet Company when she was 16. But she got so fed up with being in the chorus line that she left Covent Garden three years later to become an actress and went to Southport Rep. "It was quite a contrast. One minute I was dancing at Covent Garden, the next minute I was scrubbing the stage, literally, at Southport."

She was later "discovered" by the BBC at one of its mass auditions in Manchester. "Most of the people

were either singing or dancing, but I did some acting, so I think I got noticed."

Her success at the audition started her off on a television career that includes appearances in *Accident* on the BBC, *General Hospital*, *A*

Place To Hide on ITV, *Z Cars*, *Bergerac* and *Shoestring* (BBC). She was in *Brookside* for three months when the serial started and has also been in *Bleak House*, *No Job For A Lady*, *A Pair Of Jesus Boots* and was a presenter of *Playschool*.

Film work includes *The Optimist of Nine Elms* with Peter Sellers and *A Warm December* with Sidney Poitier. On stage she has been on two world tours with the Derek Nimmo company in *Stepping Out* and *Outside Edge* and has played in the West End and provincial tours.

She has been married twice and has two children. Daughter Katy Landis is an actress and son Simon Crane is a top stunt man.



"I play a very sensual woman, which I am looking forward to"

was hard to make the final leap."

Rosemary is a bored middle class lady. To get away for some respite, she embarked on a cruise. "On the cruise she met Stanley (played by William Lucas), and 'bang', that was that. Straight into his cabin and their

sexual relationship soon turned to love.

"After a month apart in England they decided they couldn't live without each other and one thing led to another," said Hilary.

FIRST LINE

"I'm dying for one"

ROLAND CURRAM

AS FREDDIE

Not as gay as he seems...

Roland Curram met Julia Smith in the 1950s when she was stage manager for the first theatre show he ever did.

Last year he was appearing with former *EastEnders* star Anita Dobson at the Kings Head Theatre, Islington, when Julia went along to see the performance, and after the show asked him to play the role of Freddie in *Eldorado*.

He had no doubts about leaving England to join 30 other cast members for their journey into the unknown. He said, "Seven years ago my wife and I parted and she took our two

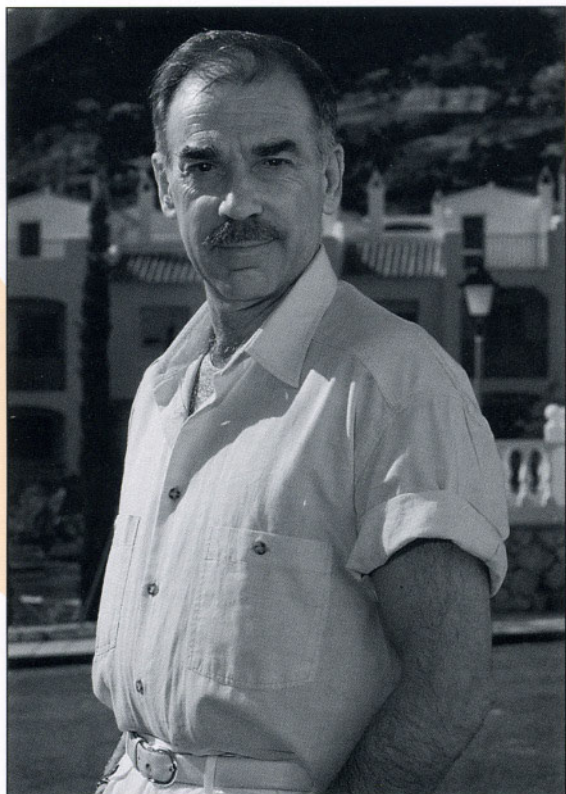
About his role as Freddie, Roland said, "It's a great part. Freddie is a retired nurse who came to live in the south of Spain with his partner of 23 years, John. But John died two years ago. Freddie is now a lonely man who lives on his own.

"But he has a great friend in Gerry (played by Buki Armstrong). They have a sort of 'great chums' relationship. Freddie is a warm-hearted, well adjusted gay. He isn't a political gay and he hates the overtones of the gay community."

Roland went to RADA when he was 16 and left two years later to work in repertory. He ran Kay Kendall over on his bicycle in *Doctor In The House* and other film credits include *Dunkirk*, *The Admirable Crichton*, *The Silent Playground*, *Decline and Fall*, and *Darling* with Dirk Bogarde, Julie Christie and Laurence Harvey.

His television credits include *Bouquet of Barbed Wire*, *Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em*, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *The Crezz*, *Moon and Son*, *Freddy and Max* and *Big Jim and the Figaro Club*.

Theatre appearances include *Little Murders* for the RSC, *Enter A Free Man* at the St Martins, *Grand Manoeuvres* at the Old Vic as a member of the National Theatre, *Design for Living* at the Globe, *Noises Off* at the Savoy and *Ross* at the Old Vic.



"I let my house in Chiswick, packed my bags, and here I am"

children with her. I was devastated and heartbroken. But now I am on my own so I let my house in Chiswick, packed my bags, and here I am. I am thrilled and excited about the programme.

"I live to work and I couldn't wait to get going. I was totally ready." *Eldorado* will be another notch on a list of credits that span television, films and theatre during a career covering nearly 40 years. His most recent TV role was in *Don't Tell Father*, a new comedy starring Tony Britton for BBC-tv.

FIRST LINE

"You want to bring him over here"

JULIE FERNANDEZ

AS NESSA LOCKHEAD

A stropky kid who'll run you over with her wheelchair

Julie Fernandez won't let her disability stand in the way of her ambition to be an actress. She went to a boarding school for disabled youngsters in Hampshire and has appeared in every school play for the past six years.

"I always wanted to be an actress," she said, and her first "big break" came when she landed a part as an extra in a hospital scene at the beginning of the film *Gorillas In The Mist*. "But the scene was cut," she said, "so no one saw my debut!"

Her real big break came when the school was asked if there was

In fact, Julie is probably more "able" than most people, and in the serial will be spending much of her time in the urbanization swimming pool. She already identifies strongly with the character she plays.

"The part is very good — Nessa has the same sort of attitude I have," said Julie, who celebrated her 18th birthday just after arriving in Spain in May 1992.

"She is the daughter in the Lockhead family, suffering a problem father and trying to look after her problem brother, Blair (played by Josh Nathan). He's always getting into trouble, and Nessa spends her life trying to get him out of it!" Her mother Gwen is played by Patricia Brake, and her father Drew by Campbell Morrison.

Julie was sad to leave her friends and school chums in England, but said, "I have lived away from home for six years at boarding school, so it's not too much of a wrench."

"Nessa has the same sort of attitude I have"

anyone in a wheelchair who could swim and do "normal" things. Her name was put forward and she won the role of Vanessa Lockhead — Nessa — in *Eldorado*.

Julie was born with brittle bones and has been in a wheelchair all her life. But, like the character

she plays, she is independent, determined, and can't stand people fussing over her. At school she represented the Southern Region in the national championships, competing in all track events from 100 to 800 metres.

Her one television appearance was on *Jim'll Fix It* after she tried to "stitch up" one of her teachers. "Our French teacher had bought himself a new watch. The school was near an Army base and, by coincidence, a helicopter would always fly over during his lesson. And he would always look at his watch and say 'pick me up in five minutes'. I got so fed up with this after three years that I asked Jim to fix it for a helicopter to land and take him away. It did, but, unknown to me, he was in on the joke. Unfortunately he had to be told because of safety regulations — so he had the last laugh!"



Framboise Gommendy

AS ISABELLE LEDUC

A flirt...

Getting a part in *Eldorado* was the most important step in her career, according to French actress and former leading ballet dancer Framboise Gommendy. "It is," she said, "my big break."

Framboise plays Isabelle, married to Philippe (played by Daniel Lombart) who runs the local tennis club, and not only serves to, but services, some of the lady members.

"Isabelle is remote and a bit of a snob," said Framboise. "She doesn't think that she's like the others on the coast. She's intellectual and obviously used to

Framboise is looking forward to playing the role. "I was offered the role and accepted very quickly. But I am afraid of the experience because I am sure that it will be very difficult, because you are putting together people who don't know each other and who are far away from home. I am just trying to keep calm!"

Framboise was a ballet dancer and then took a host of different jobs so she could pay her way through learning to act. "I took any job I could get because I really wanted to be an actress. That was when I was 18."

Her acting career began in Nice where she had theatre, film and TV parts before deciding to move to Paris. But times were hard when she arrived there because she didn't know anybody.

"Isabelle's a real woman, very sensual, but doesn't show it"

"I had to start making new contacts and I also started to take classes." Then she started getting acting jobs — she played a girl who thought she was Marilyn

Monroe in *Etoile Rouge* in 1988 and got a TV role in the comedy series *French Follies* on French television.

After that she joined French Equity, working for her fellow actors and actresses for two years, before more television work.



money. "She is a real woman, very sensual, but doesn't show it. She's unhappy with her marriage, but she is a good mother to their son, Arnaud (played by Mikael Philippe) — if a little remote."

Iker Ibanez

AS JAVIER FERNANDEZ

He's New Spain - trying to pretend that he's not macho...

Iker Ibanez, who plays Javier Fernandez, went to London to finish work on a new ITV drama — and scooped the role of Javier in *Eldorado*. The 22-year-old Spanish actor had finished filming *Under The Sun* for Thames Television, on location in southern Spain, and had to go to London for post-production recording work.

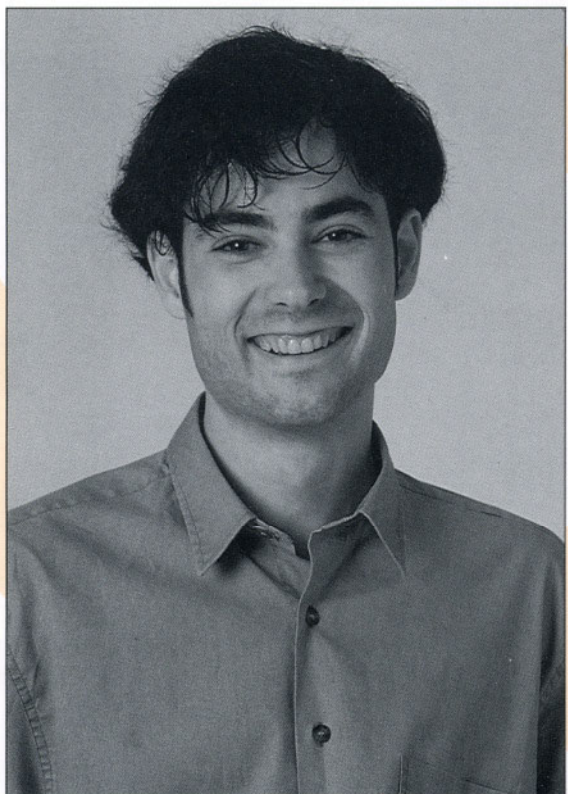
"I had heard that the BBC was planning a series in the south of Spain and wanted to apply. But I didn't know how to contact the right people.

"When I got to London, the first thing I

"Javier works at the restaurant and is Ingrid's (played by Bo Corre) boyfriend, and when he's not working in the restaurant — or following his obsession, football — he spends most of his time with her," said Iker.

Iker was born and educated in the north of Spain, went to Madrid after he finished school and started at drama school when he was 20. He studied and worked with an amateur dramatic group there, leaving drama school just after Christmas.

Since then he has worked in theatre, television and video in Spain, and his first break came with a role in *Under The Sun*, which stars Kate Hardie and Stella Maris, who plays his mother in *Eldorado*.



"Javier is obsessed with football, and Ingrid"

did was find out who I should talk to about *Eldorado*, and I sent them photos and details about myself. I got an audition — and the job. It was very exciting." Javier is the son of Roberto (played by Franco Rey), the local doctor and partner in Bunny's restaurant, and Rosario (Stella Maris), his wife who runs the local supermarket Roberto owns.

FIRST LINE

"Soon as I finish here..."

Faith Kent

AS OLIVE KING

She's a spinster - who can't quite manage to join in...

Faith Kent was preparing to take her four one-woman shows on the road when her agent phoned her to say "hold everything" — there was a possibility of a part in *Eldorado*.

She landed the role of Olive King, the nosy busybody who watches the goings-on of the inhabitants of the village through her binoculars. Faith said, "I was hyped up with the plans to take my one-woman shows on the road, so when this part came along I had a big decision to make."

"I loved what I was told about the set-up and I left my

"She's a gutsy woman and I don't think she's a bitch. She loves people, but can't get through to them. They may think she's tiresome, but she is a lonely woman." She also wastes a lot of time trying to get Snowy (played by Patch Connolly) to fix her domestic appliances.

Olive is a piano teacher, so Faith thought she had better add playing the piano to her artistic talents. "I started taking lessons in February and can now play two Chopin preludes. I want to keep on playing and I also want to learn Spanish now I'm here.

"And being here is fantastic. None of us has ever committed ourselves to something so totally without seeing a script. It's interesting — it's an adventure. And at this time of life, it's fabulous. You never know when this business will throw up a bonus."

Three years ago when she had little work, she

developed her own one-woman show based on Shakespeare's sonnets and took it to the Edinburgh Fringe where it was very well received. It led to a second one-woman show called *On The Other Hand*, about contrasts and different values on subjects like Royalty, smoking, children, marriage and love.

Her repertoire of one-woman shows soon increased to four, which she was planning to take on the road for six months this year "to try and earn some money." Her television credits include *Blind Justice*, *Spearhead*, *Play for Today*, *The Root of all Evil* and *Z Cars*. Films include *Half Moon Street* with Michael Caine and Sigourney Weaver, and among her stage credits are *My Fair Lady*, *A Month In The Country* with the Cambridge Theatre Company and *The Glass Menagerie*. She was married to Anthony Nicholls, a founder of the National Theatre and has two daughters — Kate and Phoebe, both actresses.



*"I said to myself;
this is magic,
just fantastic"*

audition feeling incredibly happy. I really wanted to do it. I have no responsibilities — my husband died 12 years ago — so I was ready for the off.

"And when I arrived here I went out on my patio, looked out

over the sea, felt the sun and said to myself — this is magic, just fantastic." Olive, said Faith, comes across as a bit of a busybody, but she doesn't want the character to become a stereotype. "She's an old thing who likes standards and values and came out to live in Spain thinking she would find them there. I think she's a bit shocked at the standards and values that she does find.

FIRST LINE

"Esto por favor..."

Daniel Lombart

AS PHILIPPE LEDUC

A dishy tennis player...

Daniel Lombart, who plays Philippe, started his career after winning a British scholarship to study dance in America, and spent six years as a leading ballet dancer before switching his talents to acting.

The character he plays is a former tennis pro who has settled on the coast and has opened a tennis club.

About Philippe, Daniel said, "He has been married to Isabelle (played by Framboise Gommendy) for 18 years and they have a teenage son, Arnaud (played by Mikael Philippe). But the marriage is, at best,

He went to New York to study ballet and modern dance. "I reached a decent level, dancing mostly in New York. I didn't tour because I didn't want to leave my wife and daughter."

But after six years he decided that a change in career direction was necessary. "My wife was an actress and dancer and she was appearing in an American TV series. They wanted a French character in the show, so she recommended me and I got the job."

Other parts in TV series and soaps followed, and Daniel took acting classes for two years to learn his trade. He worked in films and commercials but found there was too much typecasting for a French actor in

New York, and he returned to France four years ago. He struggled for the first year but then work in films and television started, including a role in the long running French soap, *Riviera*.

"But *Eldorado* will be very different from that. It will be a new challenge and one that I am looking forward to very much."

"Philippe is a little vain and very successful with women"

friendly and convenient. I think we both have affairs. Philippe is a little vain and very successful with women — although he's not that intelligent."

Daniel was born and raised in Paris and was a "late starter" in

ballet when he began studying and dancing at the age of 22. Four years later he won a scholarship to New York. "The Commonwealth Fund in London sent about 20 students each year, including one from France, away to study. I won the French scholarship."



WILLIAM LUCAS

AS STANLEY WEBB

The perfect gentleman...

William Lucas plays Stanley Webb and is an actor used to appearing in long-running drama series. He was Dr Gordon, the father, in all 75 episodes of *Black Beauty*, and then went to New Zealand with his TV "daughter", Stacey Dorning, to make another 26 episodes of the children's favourite.

He also had a short "season" in *Coronation Street*, playing a businessman trying to steal Elsie Tanner away from home and down to London.



"I had been appearing in a series called *Champion Road* with Violet Carson and Jack Howarth, when we

"It will be like nothing I have ever done before"

were all offered a new series called *Coronation Street*. Most of the future cast of the show were in *Champion Road* — but I didn't get in! My agent said the money wasn't good enough.

"But I did appear in the series about ten years later, playing this dodgy businessman. After ten episodes trying to seduce Elsie Tanner down to London, they found out 'something in my past' and I had to make a quick exit!"

Like many of the other characters in *Eldorado*, the truth about Stanley's past will eventually catch up with him. He was in the Royal Army Medical Corps and moved to Spain with Rosemary (played by Hilary Crane) after they met on a cruise.

"They appear to be a very straightforward, likable and loving couple," said William.

Last Christmas, William decided to give up stage work after appearing in Tom Stoppard's *Artist Descending a Staircase* at the Duke of York's Theatre, *Touch of Fear* at the Whitehall Theatre, and then touring in a revival of *Gaslight*.

"Doing eight shows a week on stage was becoming too much, so I told my agent that I only wanted to do film and TV work. Easy telly work! The next thing, he's fixed me up to work eight days a week — and in Spain!"

"I was asked if I would like to pull up my roots and move to Spain. Well, decisions always have to be taken based on one's personal life. I am divorced, have two grown-up sons, so it wasn't difficult to say 'yes' to the job. It will be a new challenge and like nothing I've ever done before."

William was born in Manchester and won a scholarship to Bradford Drama School after leaving the Navy in 1947. Among his other TV credits was Granada's major drama series, *Spoils of War*.

STELLA MARIS

AS ROSARIO FERNANDEZ

Old Spain - who misses the little village that's become a town, which made her rich

Stella is "thrilled" at returning to southern Spain to play doctor's wife Rosario Fernandez in *Eldorado*. She left Spain in 1979 to attend the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. She studied there for three years, fulfilling a dream she had nurtured since childhood of being involved in the theatre.

In London, her stage appearances include *The Portage of AH to Saint Christobal* directed by John Dexter (Mermaid) and *Falkland Sound - Voces de Malvinas* directed by Max Stafford-Clark (Royal Court).

She has appeared on television in *Have Fun* (Thames), *Nelly's*

"I am not like my character Rosario, who is a very conventional woman, married to the local doctor, Roberto Fernandez, (played by Franco Rey)," said Stella. "Although Rosario is intelligent and ambitious, she has fulfilled the role expected of her by her parents, husband and children."

Stella, on the other hand, has been a rebel since she was a child and had the artistic influence of her mother from an early age. "One of my keenest childhood memories is writing and reciting poetry." Stella jokes that Rosario is more like her mother than she is.

She is interested in philosophy, politics and environmental issues - concerns that she thinks were inherited from her father. When she lived in Brazil,

she worked in community theatre and education, and saw at first hand the environmental damage inflicted in the country. She is a keen supporter of organisations connected with

the environment, and is an active member of Christian Aid.

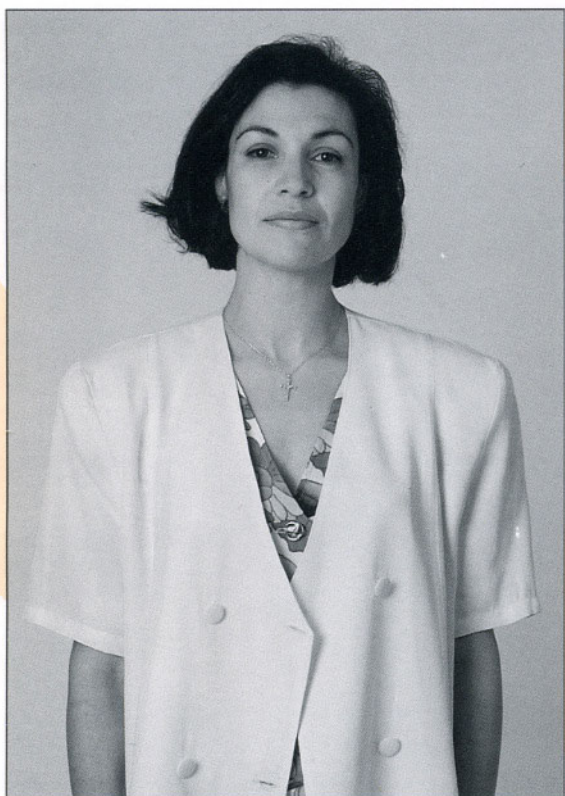
"I also like to keep fit by practising yoga, and I am interested in alternative medicine too," she says.

"I've been a rebel since I was a child"

Version (Channel 4), as Rosario in BBC-tv's *Die Kinder*, and in the award-winning BBC film *Truly, Madly, Deeply* with Juliet Stevenson. Her films include *Electric Dreams* and *Success Is The Best Revenge*.

She particularly enjoyed playing a gypsy in *Truly, Madly, Deeply* because, although she

had a fairly orthodox Spanish upbringing, she always feels "there is gypsy in my soul". This is not the first time she has worked in Spain as an actress. "Last year I worked here with Iker Ibanez, who plays my son Javier in *Eldorado*. It was for a Thames TV film called *Under The Sun*.



Kai Maurer

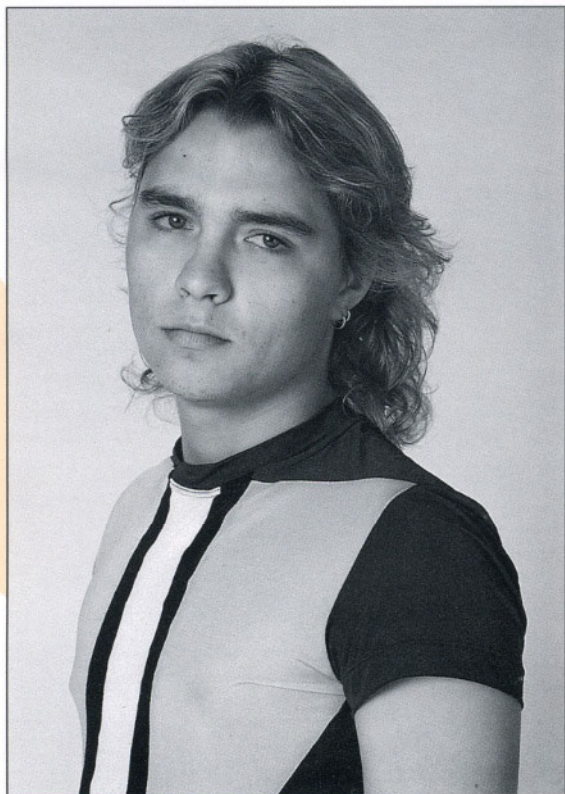
AS DIETER SCHULTZ

A German, dishy toy boy

Kai Maurer makes his acting debut in *Eldorado* as Dieter, the blond German gigolo. Kai, 19, left his native Germany a year ago and travelled to Spain for the first time. "I just happened to come to Spain because I knew someone here," he explains. "In my time here I've done a little bit of everything, including a hotel receptionist and working in the timeshare business."

19-year-old Dieter runs a windsurfing school on the coast, and is involved in a tempestuous affair with a local singer, Trish Valentine (played by Polly Perkins). "It's not a relationship made in heaven!" laughed Kai, "but they have a lot of fun together. Dieter is more interested in her money than in anything else, but there's a genuine affection between them."

Kai's big break came when he was handed a sheet of paper seeking a German boy interested in watersports. Apart from a short spell in school theatre he has not acted before. "My life changed within five hours," says an excited Kai. "I'm quite similar to Dieter in some ways, and I love his character, so it doesn't feel like acting!" Kai learned to windsurf for the part and enjoyed every minute of it. "After two days I could sail, turn and get back," he enthused.



"I love Dieter's character, so it doesn't feel like acting"

Kai's main interest is rock music — he has played drums in a band and enjoys attending rock concerts. His favourite group is Metallica from the USA.

And what of his plans for the future? "You only live once so I want to enjoy every single minute of it," Kai says. "That's why I started travelling."

Nanna Møller

AS LENE SVENDSEN

She owns a Scandinavian Clinic with a Jacuzzi...

Nanna was born in Copenhagen and attended the capital's State Theatre School. She has always wanted to act and, from the age of 19, belonged to several different theatre companies, doing mostly children's theatre.

"Denmark has the most theatre groups in the world," says Nanna. "It is well known for its tradition of children's and young people's theatre. Theatre groups tour round schools so that the children can get a closer experience of drama," she explains.



"I believe things happen when they are meant to happen"

On leaving theatre school, Nanna played in the bigger theatres in Copenhagen. On Danish television she took part in three *Crazy Shows*, *The Sonny Souffle Cock Show* (1984), *The Tonny Toupe Show* (1985), and *The Ronnie Rose Show* (1986). She has also appeared in two TV films in Denmark — *Boxing* (1987) and *Johansens Sidste Ugudelige Dage* (1988).

In 1990 Nanna teamed up with Kim Rømer (who plays her *Eldorado* husband Per Svendsen) in the Oscar-nominated film *The Waltzing Regitze*. Her most recent work is a three-part TV film, not yet screened, about the Danish singer Liwa.

When Nanna received a call from the agent in London about the part in *Eldorado* she thought it was her friends playing a dirty trick on her! After being offered the role of the Danish beautician and masseuse Lene Svendsen, who runs the Scandinavian Clinic in the shopping plaza, Nanna says she didn't give it a second thought. "It was a fantastic opportunity —

something so different. I think it will appeal to the Danes, as a lot of them visit the Costa del Sol on holiday," she says. "I'm so excited about working with actors of different nationalities all doing the same thing," she adds. In *Eldorado*, Per and

Lene have a 14-year-old daughter, Trine, played by Marchell Betak.

Nanna is the only actress in her family, although her grandmother's sister was a very famous light operatic singer. The main love of her life is her two-year-old son Søren, and her interests include horse-riding. "I'm hoping to buy a Spanish Andalusian full-blood," she says.

Nanna is keen on playing badminton and cooking, particularly Italian and French food. And her ambitions? "I'm quite a lazy person," she admits. "I believe things happen when they are meant to happen!"

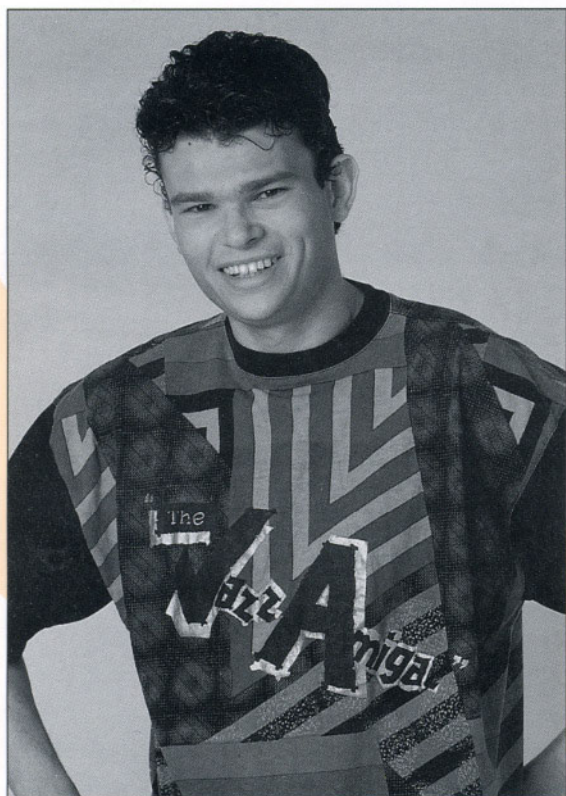
JON MORREY

AS ALLAN HINDLE

The lad from Hull who's looking for sun, sea and fun

Jon Morrey, who plays Allan Hindle, is a sports and fitness fanatic whose ambition was to become a professional footballer. He had several trials with leading clubs but decided to see if he could score on the acting front instead.

His character, Allan, is Gavin's brother (played by Darren Newton) and together they have left their home in Hull after failing to find work, and arrive in Los Barcos to open a beach bar.



"Allan isn't like his brother. He's a bit of a womaniser and a bit of a chauvinist, and he loves sport. He's more practical than his brother, so more suited to running the bar," explained Jon.

Although he always wanted to be a footballer Jon, 22, stayed DJ-ing, did some disco dancing, some modelling, and started getting walk-on parts.

He had a walk-on role in Jimmy Nail's

Spender on BBC-tv, and was a lantern man in the National Ballet's production of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

He left polytechnic after taking his degree, and *Eldorado* will give him a new challenge — his first speaking role!

"Allan's a bit of a womaniser and a chauvinist"

Campbell Morrison

AS DREW LOCKHEAD

Gwen's Glaswegian husband who's as lazy as she is busy

Campbell Morrison was thrown out of school and then thrown into acting by his boss on the building site where he went to work.

He was in the scouts — they hadn't thrown him out — and after appearing in a gang show was given a part in a local production of *Oliver!*. His building site boss saw the show and spotted Campbell as a budding actor.

"He was really great. He got the forms for me to apply to the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, I was given an audition and was taken on when I was 18," said Campbell.



"It was a bit much to ask a family man"

His career in films, television and the theatre has led him to the role of father-of-two Drew Lockhead in *Eldorado* — a role which filled him with "total terror."

"I was apprehensive and terrified because of the size of the show and because I have two kids, and a wife at university. It was a bit much to ask a family man.

"But we talked about it and decided that the way things were in the business it was the right thing to do. And what really appealed to me was being in at the start of a huge project like this. It was something that you would kick yourself for not doing."

So Campbell took two months off to be with his wife and sons Thomas, 10, and Luke, 8, spending much of the time making arrangements for them to be looked after while he was away.

Campbell plays Drew, husband of Gwen (played by Patricia Brake) and father of troublesome Blair (Josh Nathan) and wheelchair-bound daughter Nessa (Julie Fernandez). "Drew loves his daughter and dotes on her. But he can't cope with his son," explained Campbell. "Drew is married to Gwen, who is sort of upper middle class. She allows Drew to have his head — which means that every time he has a few bob in the till of his second-hand shop, he takes it out and sets off on a gambling and drinking spree."

After leaving the Royal Scottish Academy, Campbell went to the Pitlochry Festival Theatre and on to repertory theatre in Dundee and Perth. He then took an Arts Council grant to become a trainee director and six months through his one year stint, stepped in to take over directing a Billy Connolly play. It won a Fringe First Award, and as a result he got the job as Artistic Director of the Borderline Theatre Company.

He came to London in 1981 with a play called *Rents* and subsequently was asked to join the RSC. His first television role was in *Educating Marmalade*, a children's programme for Thames TV. His subsequent credits include *Life Without George*, *Specials*, *Jeeves and Wooster*, *Boon*, *The Paradise Club*, *Bullman* and *The Bill*.

He left the RSC in 1989 to concentrate on film and TV work, and his film credits include *The Pope Must Die* and *Hidden City*.

FIRST LINE

"You get on all right love?"

JOSH NATHAN

AS BLAIR LOCKHEAD

A problem teenager...

16-year-old Josh, who plays the Lockhead family's wayward teenage son Blair, has only recently moved to Spain. He has been at boarding school in England since his family moved to the Costa del Sol in 1987.

Josh is no stranger to the coast. "I spent my school holidays visiting my grandmother, who owns a bar on the Costa del Sol," he explained. So he feels very at home at the new English International College in Marbella, where he is taking GCSE's in Spanish, French, English literature and language, maths, biology, history and drama. "But

Josh is not the first member of his family to pursue an acting career — his mother Sherine was a professional stage actress in the UK before they moved to Spain, and she takes a keen interest in the local amateur theatre group.

There are some parallels between Josh and his screen character Blair, "but enough differences to keep my TV role quite separate from my real life," he laughed. "Blair's a bit of a handful, and his father doesn't really know what to do with him." His father Drew (played by Campbell Morrison), runs a second-hand shop, while his mother Gwen (Patricia Brake) is the rock of the family.

Like the Lockheads, Josh's family moved to Spain from the UK, where Josh attends a local school. Josh has three brothers — Adam, Toby and Leo — and a sister, Zoe, for whom he has a typical teenage cool fondness. "Blair is fond of his sister Nessa (played by Julie Fernandez), too."

Josh is delighted to have landed the part of Blair.

"It gives me some financial independence." But he is modest about the prospect of becoming well-known, and is all too aware that the exhausting business of filming three episodes of *Eldorado* every week will be far from glamorous.

Josh's hobbies include going out with his friends, spending money on clothes and records, and playing with his large collection of computer games. Unlike his screen character, who shows a keen interest in keeping fit and enjoys playing volleyball on the beach, Josh does little in the way of keeping fit — preferring to use his weights in order to keep in shape.



"Blair's a bit of a handful . . . his father doesn't know what to do with him"

squeezing them in between filming schedules means that I now have very little free time."

It was while he was acting with his college drama group that a casting agent

spotted him and asked him to come to an audition for the part of Blair. *Eldorado* is Blair's television debut, but he has had a passion for acting since he took part in school plays in England.

Darren Newton

AS GAVIN HINDLE

Runs a beach bar with big brother Allan and fights him for the girls

Darren Newton, who plays Gavin Hindle, was becoming very disillusioned after finding no acting work since leaving drama school in July 1991.

But his big break came when he heard that producer Julia Smith was looking for two lads with northern accents to play brothers from Hull in *Eldorado*.

He auditioned — and got the part. "This is my first professional engagement and my big break," said an excited Darren. "I left Scottish RADA last summer and had found no work by Christmas. I must admit I was

Darren, 24, started acting at school and in local youth theatres. At 16, when it was time to make a career decision, he opted for the acting profession and joined the National Youth Theatre in London where, among other productions, he toured with the company in *Zigger Zaggar* and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*.

He left after nearly three years to go to college in his native Northumberland and take 'A' level theatre studies to help him get acting work. From college he went to the Royal Academy of Drama in Glasgow — Scottish RADA — and left in July 1991. While his long, hard search for professional work went on, he found temporary work outside the acting business.

"This is my big break"

getting very despondent. But then a few more auditions came up and I felt more hopeful."

Darren plays Gavin, who with his brother Allan (played by Jon Morrey) has left the bleak employment prospects of their home town, Hull, to open a beach bar at Los Barcos. But he finds

that working a bar can be dull — especially when business is slack — and he is involved in an up-market time-share operation to supplement their income.



POLLY PERKINS

AS TRISH VALENTINE

She's a "star"

Singer and actress Polly Perkins, who has lived on the Costa del Sol for seven years, had the part of Trish Valentine specially written for her after a chance meeting between her great friend June Brown — Dot Cotton in *EastEnders* — and *Eldorado* creative team Julia Smith and Tony Holland.

"June was coming down to stay with me for some peace and quiet — I live in the mountains — and Julia and Tony were doing a recce for *Eldorado*.

They met on the plane and June invited them for a drink in a bar where I was singing. They saw me and created the part of Trish."



"It's a turbulent relationship . . . murders go on in that house"

That was a year ago and Polly, a self-confessed "60s has-been" heard very little more. "I was out of contact because I live here but I hoped the programme would take off."

Then she heard that she had the part of Trish, who lives in the village with her windsurfing toyboy Dieter (played by Kai Maurer) and sings in Joy's wine bar and at the Hindle brothers' beach bar. She also runs a video shop for the dubious Marcus Tandy (played by Jesse Birdsall).

"Trish is a singer who came out here to work the bars and clubs, taking around her own equipment to do her show. She's in her 40s and Dieter, who runs the local windsurfing school, is 19. Believe me — it's a turbulent relationship and he causes her a lot of trouble. Murders go on in that house," said Polly.

Polly came from a theatrical family — her father was a comedian, her mother was a singer and impressionist and her grandfather worked with Charlie Chaplin — and Polly herself started her career when she was 15 as a Windmill girl.

Then she met her manager, and Polly made the first of many records, *I Reckon You*. None were huge successes, she admitted, but at the same time she started doing a lot of television work.

She was the first compere of *Ready Steady Go*, and appeared in *Z Cars*, *Play for Today* and many other BBC-tv productions. "I had lots of cameo roles and always played the cheerful cockney."

And there were rock and roll tours as well — on the same bill as The Beatles, Dusty Springfield and Cilla Black, among many others.

She gave up rock and roll to have her first son, Toby, then started writing for *The Stage* about the cabaret circuit, and went on to work for various pop magazines. Gradually she edged back into cabaret and television.

"I became a sort of leading lady of the West End clubs like Churchills, The Celebrity, The Blue Angel.

"There was more television including a drama-documentary, *Rules of Justice* — where I met June Brown — and I was in *Nanny* with Wendy Craig."

By then she had had her second son, Timothy, and was thinking of moving to a warmer climate. "My eldest son was working so I picked up my youngest and the dogs and moved to Spain. I thought it would be easier to get work down here than in other parts of Europe."

She worked the clubs and bars of the Costa del Sol and now loves the pace of life so much that she has no plans to return to England.

"And this role is the re-launch of my television career. I haven't done any TV for ten years and never thought I would again. But this is a dream come true."

FIRST LINE

"I take it you were still wearing these at the time?"

Mikael Philippe

AS ARNAUD LEDUC

At 16...he's always in love

French-born Mikael Philippe, 17, is delighted to bring his bi-lingual skills to the part of Arnaud, the son of Isabelle (played by Framboise Gommendy) and Philippe Leduc (Daniel Lombart). Landing the part in *Eldorado* is Mikael's first big break.

In addition to acting, all-rounder Mikael sings and dances. A suggestion from his French mother that he follow in the footsteps of a tap-dancing relative led young Mikael into a career in acting.

At the same time as he was offered the part of Arnaud in *Eldorado*, Mikael was picked to appear in *La Cage Aux Folles*, but the chance to play the sporty yet sensitive Arnaud was too good an opportunity to miss.

"I never thought my parents would agree to me coming to Spain," said Mikael. "But my dad said yes and they both thought it would be good experience — so I accepted."

Mikael turned up at the audition in London with his 14-year-old brother, David, who was also up for the part. He was asked to read part of the script in English with a French accent. "There's no rivalry," said Mikael. "He's really pleased that I got the part."

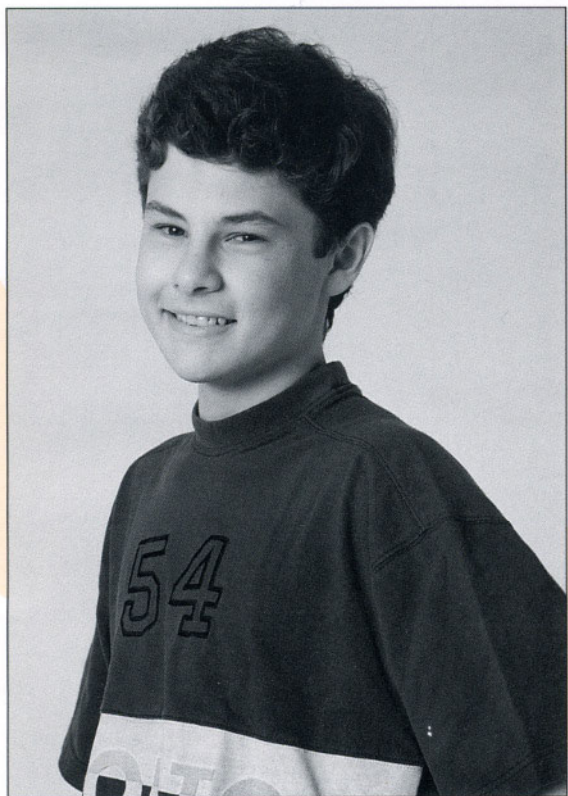
Mikael will continue his studies in Spain while recording *Eldorado*. He plans to become a vet or go into medicine and is working on 'A' levels in biology, chemistry and maths.

Like his character Mikael likes sport, particularly rugby, table-tennis, ski-ing and windsurfing. He enjoys watching football and his favourite team is Arsenal. Mikael's chief interest is dancing — both tap and modern. He also likes to collect things, including coins and stamps.

A good singer as a child, Mikael's voice broke in the middle of an audition and he vowed never to sing again!

"I plan to become a vet or go into medicine"

In 1987 he joined up with Generation Theatre, an acting group for six to 30-year-olds. His confidence built and he made his stage debut in 1988 in *Oliver Twist* at the Hexagon Theatre in his home town of Reading, Berkshire, followed by *The King and I*.



FIRST LINE

"I have to go back to the tennis club"

KATHY PITKIN

AS FIZZ

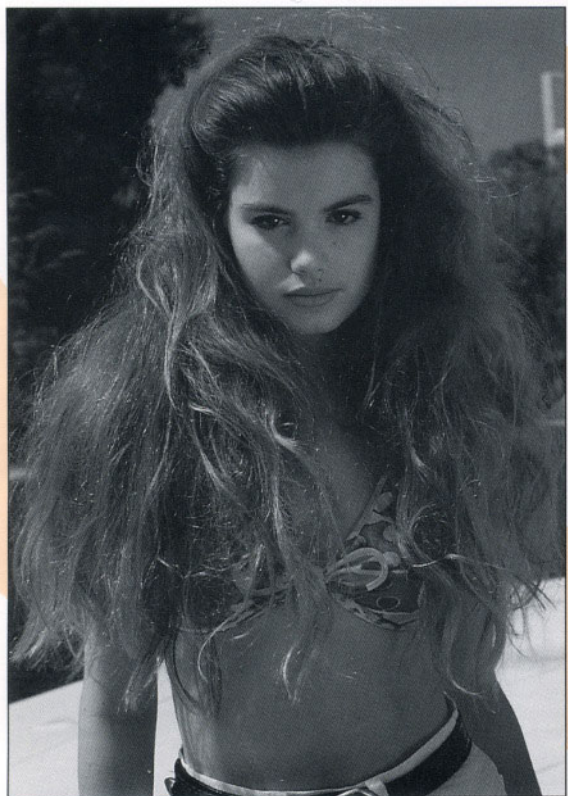
The new arrival - watch out!

Kathy Pitkin had a schoolgirl dream to become famous. And that dream is coming true.

Kathy, 16, won the role of Fizz from more than 100 hopefuls to set her on the road to television stardom. She started modelling when she was still at school and queued for hours to become an extra in a TV film.

She said, "I really loved it — the atmosphere, everything. I had a little dream to become famous

but I never thought it would become real. So



"I had a little dream to become famous"

I queued for four hours with 4000 other young hopefuls to be an extra in a TV film of *The Pied Piper* with Peter O'Toole. They picked 200 youngsters and I was one of them."

The part led to more modelling assignments and now to *Eldorado*. "Modelling was an option but I wanted to be an actress — working for a week on *The Pied Piper* had given me the taste. I really loved it."

She started full time modelling last August after leaving school and then got a call about the possibility of a part in *Eldorado* from an agent who remembered her face. "I know a lot of girls wanted the part but eventually there were nine of us left. I did a screen test and here I am."

At the time she was acting with the Oldham Theatre Workshop — "But this is my first and my big break."

Fizz is a 17-year-old runaway, begging on the streets of London when she meets Bunny Charlson (played by Roger Walker). He takes her for a meal rather than give her money. More meals follow and despite the age gap — he is just under 50 — he asks her to go back to Spain with him as his wife. She does.

"Fizz is a northern girl who had problems at home and ran away. She is homeless and begging, naive and innocent. But she's strong because of the hard time she had at home. She's very bubbly and doesn't know the effect she has on men. She's very sensual, but doesn't realise it."

Kathy had mixed emotions about leaving England and her home in Alderley Edge, Cheshire. "My parents are divorced and they are both very excited about this opportunity. I was excited — but upset to be leaving my family and friends. But this is the one chance you get and I can't believe it's happened."

Her ambition now is to learn to drive a car. "I wanted to start on my 17th birthday — but I don't know if I will learn in Spain. They all drive on the wrong side of the road!"

FIRST LINE

"All Right!"

FRANCO REY

AS ROBERTO FERNANDEZ

The ladies all love him ...

In Spain there is a lottery with a huge payout that they call The Fat One. "And that is what I have won by getting this role in *Eldorado*," said Franco Rey.

The Spanish-born actor, who had lived in London for the past 20 years, had been pessimistic about his acting career in England. Jobs were very few and far between — "British audiences don't like foreign accents," he said.

His last television role was in three episodes of *Howards' Way* for BBC-tv in 1989, although he has done a lot of TV commercials. So he

Roberto liked the place when it was a small fishing village. But he's made money out of the development and expansion and, realising there is a free European market in view, he is now more inclined towards the people he used to call "foreigners". The Fernandez are "a proper Spanish family, and his family is the most important thing to Roberto."

Franco Rey took up acting while he was studying to be a doctor at medical school in Valencia. He didn't finish his studies — there are no grants in Spain — and after a row with his father his money to study was cut off. So he went to Majorca with a fringe theatre and then decided his future was in England.

"But nobody told me how difficult it would be to get an Equity card!" Eventually he got one to take part in medieval jousting shows. "Jobs were few and far between, so I started working for an optical firm and then decided to set up my own business."

When the role in *Eldorado* came up, he sold up, packed up his wife and

13-month-old baby Daniela, and moved to Spain. His most difficult decision was leaving behind his two daughters by his first marriage — Charlotte, 15, and Claudia, 12.

His other great decision was to leave behind Chelsea Football Club, where he has been a season-ticket holder for the past 14 years. "I was really upset on the day I gave back my season ticket. But I have a very good friend who is sending over videos of every match they play."

"Yes," he reflected, "my 20 years in England were the happiest of my life, but I was beginning to miss my own country. It was calling me back."

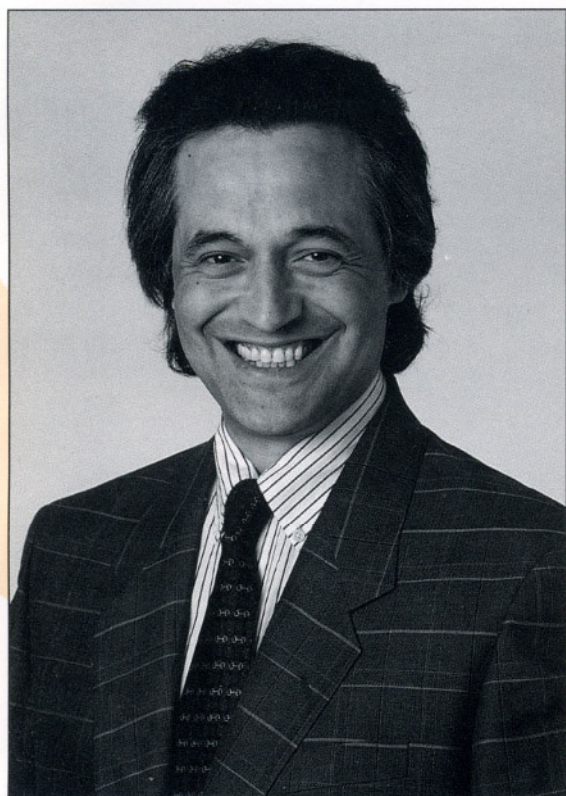
"I was beginning to miss my own country. It was calling me back"

opened an optician practice in Maida Vale some years back, after working for an optical firm. He sold the practice three years ago and moved into the shoe import/export

business before selling up everything to move back to Spain for *Eldorado*.

He plays Dr Roberto Fernandez, married to Rosario (played by Stella Maris), and has some lucrative local business interests.

"He owns the local supermarket, which Rosario runs, and is a partner in Bunny's restaurant *Giorgio's* — where his son Javier (played by Iker Ibanez) works — so he's doing very nicely," said Franco. He also has a 16-year-old daughter, Maria, played by Maria Sanchez.



FIRST LINE

"Buenos dias. Very...Bunny"

KIM ROMER

AS PER SVENDSEN

He's looking for some colour in his life...

Kim Romer, who plays Danish chandlery owner Per Svendsen, was born in 1959 and comes from Copenhagen, Denmark. He has lived there for most of his life. In 1965 he went to Indiana in the USA with his parents for one year and, whilst there, learnt to speak English.

After leaving High School in Copenhagen, Kim decided that he wanted to be an actor. He has family links with the profession — his aunt is a famous actress in Denmark and his uncle is an actor and theatre director who started the Danish equivalent of

Kim lived in London for eight months and worked in "hundreds of jobs", including a spell at a hotel in Torquay "just like Fawlty Towers" and dressing as a clown and waving to cars at a petrol station. At the end of 1987, Kim returned to Denmark where he worked in many theatre productions. He enjoys singing and it was suggested that he train as an opera singer.

His film roles include an appearance in a detective film, *Murder in Paradise*, working with Nanna Moller (who plays his *Eldorado* wife Lene) in *Waltzing Regitze*, which was nominated for an Oscar as Best Foreign Film in 1990; and playing a resistance fighter in *A Day In October*.

Kim's part as Per Svendsen in *Eldorado* came through a friend who was too young for the role. When he was told he had the part, his reaction was to scream. "I celebrated with my friends and family, then I met Nanna and we screamed together!" he laughed.

"I celebrated with my family, then I met Nanna and we screamed together!"

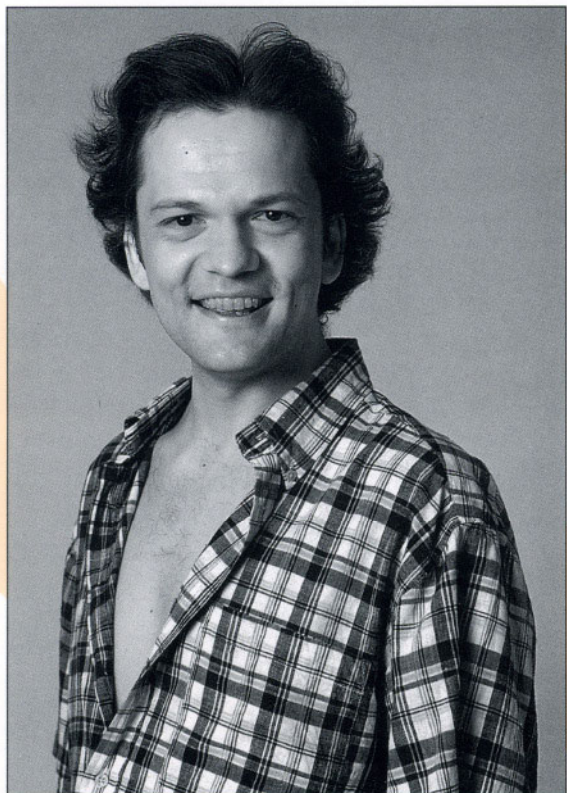
Monty Python at the same time as the British programme.

In 1983 Kim won a place at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and stayed there for three years. He then worked at Westcliff Theatre in Essex for six

months in 1986/7 with Patch Connolly (who plays handyman Snowy White in *Eldorado*). There he appeared in *Lark Rise To Candleford*, as a cockney detective sergeant in an Agatha Christie thriller — "a challenge for a Dane," he admitted — and a dual role as a crocodile and Nana the Dog in *Peter Pan*.

"Per is an honest sort of chap who runs his own business at the marina, supplying stuff for boats. He has never been unfaithful to his wife Lene, who runs the Scandinavian Clinic, but he is certainly attracted to Isabelle (played by Framboise Gommendy), the wife of the French tennis pro Philippe Leduc." Per and Lene have a 14-year-old daughter, Trine (played by Marchell Betak).

Kim's interests are ink drawing and watercolour painting. He also enjoys reading and has a large collection of books. A great traveller, he has covered most of America, back-packed round Europe, and in 1983 sailed to Bangkok on an exhibition cruise ship. "Sailing is in my blood, and every summer as a child I sailed with my father in Denmark, so Julia must have had second sight to give me a job which is connected with the sea."



MARIA SANCHEZ

AS MARIA FERNANDEZ

The Spanish teenager who can't wait to grow up

16-year-old Maria Sanchez is from Malaga in Spain. She attends high school in Fuengirola where her studies include maths, English literature, latin and philosophy. Her favourite subjects are English — "I always pass my exams," she explains — and Spanish history.

Maria started acting at school, where she played a dancer. She also enjoys comedy parts. But for her future career, she is torn between becoming a professional actress, an English teacher, or a photographic model.

Maria Sanchez is the youngest child of four brothers and one sister. In her free time she likes to go out with friends to the beach and discos. She also loves swimming and watching horror movies — "The more gruesome the better!" she joked.

Although her family animals include a dog called Linda and two turtles, Maria's pet hate is horses. She's been frightened of them since the age of seven.



"I don't know whether to become an actress or a teacher"

The role of Maria, the 14-year-old daughter of Dr Roberto and Rosario Fernandez (played by Franco Rey and Stella Maris) and sister of Javier (played by Iker Ibanez), came her way when an agent visited her school to look for a young girl. Maria Sanchez answered some questions and was chosen from eight

others for the part. "I was very surprised and my family and friends were so excited for me," she said.

Sandra Sandri

AS PILAR MORENO

The runaway, who finds more than she bargained for...

Sandra Sandri, 19, who plays Pilar Moreno, went to an audition with her cousin, just to keep her company, and ended up getting the job! That was three years ago, and since then Sandra has been acting, dancing and modelling — but her ambition remains to go to university.

Sandra's character Pilar is a bright young girl who has run away from her strict Spanish upbringing, where she could see little future for her career or prospects.

Said Sandra, "Pilar is an accomplished horsewoman, and soon after arriving on the

Sandra started theatre classes when she was at school and three years ago went for that fateful audition. "My cousin is a model and I only went along to keep her company. But at the audition, I got the job and she didn't. Luckily she wasn't too upset!"

From the video came work in a Spanish comedy film called *Boom Boom*. Television work followed, and for six months she was the hostess on a quiz show, and was offered numerous modelling assignments. In between her work she fits in her hobbies, including dancing, Spanish music and cooking.

But her ambition is still to go back to learning. "I have qualifications to go to university and I would like to study looking after youngsters with speech problems and Downs Syndrome children." With no time limit on a university place, she will make her decision later.

Sandra also loves watching football — but has given up playing the game! "I played for two years in the girls' team at school. I used to play on the right wing, but didn't score many goals."

"Marcus falls for her... and she loves him"

coast she gets a job at the riding stables which are partly owned by the suave Marcus Tandy (played by Jesse Birdsall). He falls for her and wants her to stop working at the stables — but although she loves him, she loves her work as much."



LESLIE UDWIN

AS JOY SLATER

Joy runs a good bar...alone

Leslee Udwin starred as herself in a BBC Screen Two film *Sitting Targets*, about her struggle against an unscrupulous landlord — based on her own frightening experiences.

Leslee plays Joy Slater, who owns and runs the village wine-bar in the shopping plaza — a local meeting place. She is also great friends with the outrageous Trish Valentine (played by Polly Perkins), who sings in the bar and runs the video shop for Marcus Tandy (played by Jesse Birdsall).

Joy Slater left a broken marriage and successful wine-bar in



“Joy's intelligent, independent, strong and attractive”

Twickenham, Surrey, to start a new life in Spain. “She’s intelligent, independent, strong and attractive,” said Leslee.

“But she is also searching for something. Everything she turns her hand to is a success — like her wine-bar in Twickenham — but she is never satisfied with that success and must move on to new challenges.”

She produced Granada TV’s *Who Bombed Birmingham?*, which she feels is one of her proudest achievements. She set up the project in 1987 when she was acting in theatre. “There was an Irish actor in the cast and at the time the appeal over the Birmingham Six was going on.

So I set up a treatment. At first I had no opinions, but the more I read the more I was convinced there had been a miscarriage of justice. Eventually Granada agreed to make the project as a drama-documentary. It was the first time I had produced a programme and I am very proud of what we achieved.”

Leslee started her acting career in 1979 on stage in the Royal Court’s award-winning play *Not Quite Jerusalem*. Her first television appearance was in *The Merchant of Venice*, part of the BBC’s Shakespeare series.

She then followed a mainly classical acting career, working at the National Theatre and Royal Court. Other television credits include BBC-2’s *Shadow Of The Noose*. After making *Who Bombed Birmingham?* she starred in the American film *Forgotten Prisoners*, and has since appeared regularly on television and in the theatre.

Then came the offer of a part in *Eldorado*, and she jumped at the chance. “I had no problem in saying yes and moving out to Spain. It’s a wonderful opportunity.”

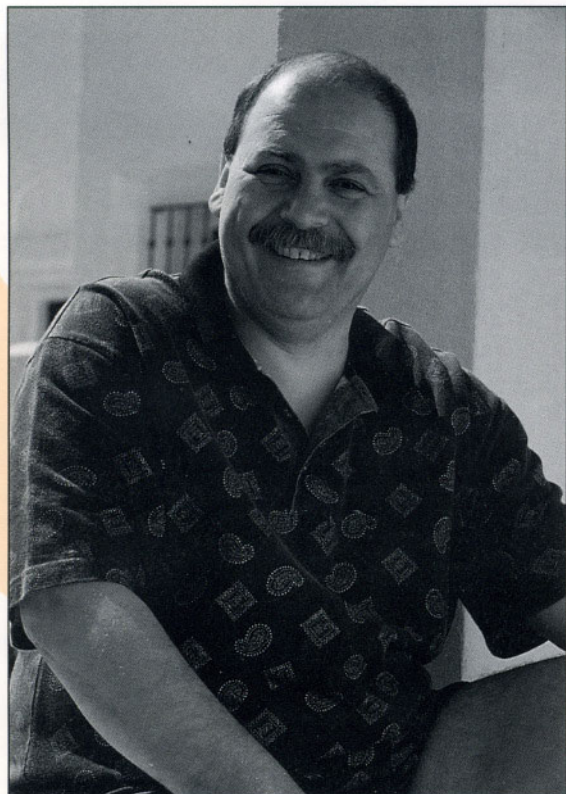
ROGER WALKER

AS BUNNY

"Chop chop" here comes Bunny...

Roger Walker left his *Waterfront Beat* to take the role of Bunny Charlson in *Eldorado*. It is a part which is likely to stimulate some lively debate, as Bunny — in his late forties — returns to the coast with a stunning 17-year-old bride, Fizz, played by newcomer Kathy Pitkin.

Bunny owns the local restaurant, Giorgio's, in partnership with Dr Roberto Fernandez (played by Franco Rey), and became infatuated with teenage runaway Fizz on a recent visit to London.



"She was homeless and begging in the street," explained Roger. "Bunny didn't give her

Bunny has lived in Spain for some years, after leaving the Army, although he still retains some of his Army ways.

Roger's last television appearance was in *Waterfront Beat* for BBC Television, in a part specially created for him. He had been to see *Brookside* creator Phil Redmond about a role in the Channel 4 serial. Later Phil remembered that Roger was a yachting enthusiast and gave him the role of a boat-loving detective inspector in *Waterfront Beat*. His other television credits include three series of *Big Deal* with Ray Brooks, and a series of *Gentlemen and Players* for ITV. He had cameo roles in three other major BBC-tv dramas — *Blackeyes*, the award-winning *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit*, and *A Time To Dance*.

*"I love sailing,
and I hope to do
some in Spain"*

Roger got the role of Bunny in *Eldorado* when his agent phoned him and asked if he would be prepared to move to Spain for a year or two. He talked it over with his wife of 15 years, Ann Curthoys — a former actress who is now an agent — and

any money but bought her a meal instead. He met her again and bought her another meal. Others followed and when he was due to go back to Spain it was decision time. He asked her to go with him, and she said yes."

they agreed it was too good an opportunity to miss.

Besides leaving his family — he has two daughters from a previous marriage and two step-children — his other sadness was selling his boat. "I love sailing but it would have been impossible to keep the boat in dry dock. But I hope to get in some sailing down here in Spain.

PRODUCTION Eldorado CREDITS

Created and Storylined by Tony Holland and Produced by Julia Smith

Line Producer	David Shanks	Script Editors	John Maynard Alison Davis
Regular writers	Tony Jordan Tony McHale Gilly Fraser Bill Lyons Jane Hollowood Juliet Ace Bev Doyle Glen McCoy Rob Gittins	Art Directors	Andrew Ackland-Snow Neil Lamont
		Lighting Directors	Bill Minto Alexander Gurdon
		Senior Cameramen	John Dailley Nigel Williams
Directors include	Philip Draycott Garth Tucker Fiona Cummin Mervyn Cummin Henry Foster Geoff Feld Nick Prosser Stephen Butcher Philip Cassan	Video Tape Editors	Michael Hunt John Plummer
		Sound Supervisors	Mark Nicholls Robert Miles
		Dubbing Mixer	Keron Steele
		Senior Accountant	Arthur Tarry
Series Production Designer	Keith Harris	Publicity	Liz Kallend (Spain) Hellen Martin (London)
Costume Designer	Chris Marlowe	Executive Producer	Verity Lambert
Head of Construction	Jose Tomas Sanchez (Coin)	Executive Producer	John Dark
Title Music	Simon May	Associate Producer for J D & T	James Todesco
Graphic Design	Alan Jeapes		