

Cast Interview

[00:00:00] **Andrew:** Hello everyone. This is Andrew Pond, Artistic director of Eclectic Full Contact Theatre. Welcome to Season 2 of The Half Hour Audio Hour. Today we are featuring an interview with two of the cast members of Blag— Winter Foenander and Sam Cartwright. We hope you enjoy First thing Winter and Sam. Thank you so very much for, uh, doing this for being part of this, uh, this project. Uh, we really do appreciate it.

[00:00:13] **Winter:** Pleasure.

[00:00:14] **Sam:** Yeah. Thanks for having us. Yeah.

[00:00:16] **Andrew:** The first question I've got is since I love actor origin stories, how did you get into acting and what kind of drew you into voice acting and, and, uh, Sam we'll start with you.

[00:00:30] **Sam:** Um, so I kind of first got into acting when I was a young boy. I was about 12, very aimless in life. Didn't know what I was doing. I was a bit of a mess about, and I got cast as Macbeth in our little Shakespeare school's production for Macbeth. And I was very excited. I learned all my lines. It was like learning a different language and I just, I fell in love with it from there. Um, I just couldn't imagine myself doing anything else because I didn't want to do anything else really. Um, and then, so it all started with sort of stage acting and then I sort of discovered more paths and I kind of like voice acting because I love to watching things like, um, like little Brit. And Catherine Tate show, which are sort of like English, sort of like a sketch comedies. And they always did sort of funny voices. And I loved copying funny voices, um, and doing accents. That's kind of what drew me to voice acting. I'm sort of trying to copy, you know, do impressions and do little funny accents and things. And then I realized that you could just record it and make money from it.

So I thought I'd give it a go.

[00:01:30] **Andrew:** I just love the fact that a bunch of 12 year olds were doing Macbeth. Um, Winter, what about you?

[00:01:39] **Winter:** Well, I wasn't, uh, well I grew up in Ireland, so I didn't really have when I was, when I was like eighties kids. So I didn't really have that kind of route. The only thing acting wise, we had, it was an nativity play that was diabolical. Uh, and so, uh, it's that wasn't really an, I do one of the Kings and I had the most lines out of everybody and it was like, oh, this is great.

Oh, thanks. Thank you for giving me. The biggest part of the, now I want of the biggest part. But back then, I was like, I don't want this nativity play part. No one is going to be watching it. It was gonna be fun of it all boys Catholic school. And we have this every day anyway, so that was one that was the, the, the, the start of it really.

But then when I went, when I was at-- in my misspent youth and I was in a place called skull years ago. And when I was maybe in my teens and we're out drinking. And, uh, I don't know if you both have this kind of like idea when you have like, had all these stories and start telling you all your stories, you put them into a set and you kind of like go, all right, I put this one here, put this one here...

anyway, we'll drinking some Aftershock . Anyway, this is-- you can take that out. We're drinking some, uh, alcohol. And so we were there and it was a really small pub called Hackett's. And this pub and had all my stories down, went to loads of house parties. And I was like, okay, here we go. Had a shot of this particular brand of whatever it was, this crazy juice.

And then it started talking to these German people. I mean, Germans are tough crowd as well. Right. So I did all my stories back to back without stopping. Uh, and then at the end of this, uh, monologue, I got a, a, a, like a standing ovation they're like--YAAAA, and I was like I said to my friend, I said, what was that?

What was that? I need some more of that basically attention. So that's when I get why I got into acting. And, uh, the reason why I got into voice acting is because I can do it from home. And also, uh, I, I love working with different people who are doing voice actors, because they're so much more fun because you just let yourself go and go with it altogether.

That's so much more fun, I think, because you know, there's no kind of, uh, preening, it's just like, let's just get the best out of this. Um, so I, I love, I thoroughly loved doing the voices and I'm sorry, Sam, for butchering the, uh, the Liverpool accent earlier on, but we'll talk about it later.

[00:03:38] **Andrew:** Excellent. So what drew you to this particular project? Uh, in, uh, specifically,

[00:03:45] **Winter:** Okay. This project, I, I just like, uh, I consider myself a bit of an underdog as well, because there was no real route I'll say back in Ireland to kind of move to the, the performance or getting the attention as much as possible. So I found that this project really connected with me. When I read the

script, it's like these guys, they're just, they just got stuck in jobs that they hated because they didn't have the opportunities or a route to get to where they, where they wanted to.

You know, they just, just unfortunate lottery. That's how it is in life. And I think it's a story that everybody can connect with. Like, you know, they didn't get this, that thing. They were passed up for this promotion. They were passed up for, for this opportunity, they just weren't in the right place at the right time.

They just, the family didn't have enough money. It's such a lovely story. When the little guy wins. They're like, I know when I read through it, I was, I emailed you guys. And I said, oh man, I got Misty at the end. It was just really, it was just like, yes, the little guy. And I'm not a very big guy. I'm five foot seven.

So the little guy won and I was like, I am so into this project that wherever I am.

[00:04:43] **Andrew:** Excellent. And Sam, what about you?

[00:04:45] **Sam:** Um, yeah, I mean, I, I, this kind of similar, similar to Winter. , you know, like when we all love an underdog and, um, like I was saying before, when I was younger, I loved watching, um, uh, Laurel and Hardy and this sort of has a sort of Laurel and Hardy esque feel to it.

If, you know, if Laurel and Hardy was a voice, uh, program because obviously there are a lot of slapstick, but there is still a lot of, um, like to-ing and fro-ing and back and forth. When you've got two people, you can really develop the characters. And I love the fact that there was only two people, partly because as Winter was saying it's more attention on us.

You know, there's only two parts, less time for everyone else. Um, but also because it's such a clever, yeah. It's such a clever concept and, um, you can really focus on, you know, what we're saying and what we're doing. And I think, yeah, I just, I just thought it was, um, it was, it was kind of a...

[00:05:33] **Andrew:** Excellent and you, you, you may have touched slightly on it a little bit here, uh, but, I'm, I'm going to ask the question anyway. What, if any similarities are there between you and your character, Sam?

[00:05:46] **Sam:** Um, I guess I can be quite, quite a spontaneous, I guess the word is more impulsive. I guess I can be quite impulsive as well, especially when I've had a few drinks. Um, I think, yeah, it is. It's kind of like longing for just something exciting to happen.

I think we can all be a bit like that sometimes. So, um, that's the main thing. I'm not really into football, so I didn't really have that connection with the character. Um, but we can all draw I think for me, actors are my celebrities, so I can sort of see, imagine that it, me, at the Oscars, you know, I'm running onto the red carpet next to like Olivia Coleman or something.

That's my like equivalent.

[00:06:22] **Andrew:** Excellent. Winter?

[00:06:24] **Winter:** Uh, I think that's the character of Paul. I think that he's my, uh, my paranoia and my sort of like, you know, the, my internal sort of like, no, they shouldn't do that. Just don't do that. Don't do that. But I, I always flip it. Uh, but he, but that's why I relate to it really, because it's like, you know, Paul just finally turns it around.

He's like, right, we're doing this. It doesn't matter what you think we're going to go. We're not going to, we're going to take a chance. W we're not gonna listen to what could potentially happen. Let's not try and control this. And he finally gets out of his, uh, his kind of ruts that he's in, you know, cause he's like, oh, I, I say weird story.

Now. I actually applied to do an accountancy course in the sad times of when I couldn't get any work. And I was like, oh, okay, I'm going to be an accountant now. That's it. I love Excel, don't I? I do love Excel. No, no Winter, you don't like Excel. Just. I'm just, just stop this, stop this. You don't even buy that book.

Oh, great. Now I bought a book. Great. Okay. That's to have to sell it on eBay now. That's wonderful. So yeah, so Paul really did kind of-- I connected with that and as same Sam, right. Just the underdog, you know, it was just that I say, I really feel, so you just kind of connect with that. Um that, that, that part of you there is like, you have to w yeah.

This, this one day we'll. Then we'll get it. We'll get it back. We'll get all this back. This'll all come back to us is karma. I'm being, I'm a nice person. This is going to come around. It's going to be, it's going to be my moment. And it's all going to come back to me. I'm going to give that person 10 pounds.

[00:07:47] **Andrew:** So since both of you really like uh, voice acting, we saw sort of this like spike in audio drama due to the lockdown in the pandemic and everything. Um, what do you think is the future of this medium? Given the fact that we are now, uh, reopening live performance?

[00:08:12] **Winter:** I think that, uh, I think it will continue to blossom really. I think it's having a, uh, a Renaissance, uh, cause like I think that there. You know, people are just forgotten about it and then just kind of bring it back. It's just, it's more intimate. I don't think that it's ever going to go away and like, like there's certain places in Canada where it's, there's still a Blockbuster there, right? It's because they can't get the internet. There. There's a place. There's a place everywhere in this, in this, in this country, this planet where they can't get internet work. Good enough. The, the, uh, the video won't come across, so they need audio. They need an audio drama in their life to fill that gap, which is not video.

[00:08:52] **Sam:** Yeah. I mean, I completely agree. I think after you know, during lockdown, um, people really started to give audio dramas a chance because after the last sort of TV shows and films came out that had been recorded pre lockdown there wasn't much new content about, and when people gave audio dramas a chance, I think, you know, it completely showed its worth, will continue to be, you know, um, a growing success. And in this day and age, people love consuming media. They want media of all types. When you're bored of video, you go and read and then there's audiobooks, and then you watch something on YouTube and then you are showing on Tik TOK, and then it's a film and then it's Netflix.

And then, you know, eventually people do come to audio dramas as the next exciting, you know, but a part of their daily media consumption.

[00:09:35] **Winter:** Yeah. Like, as you're saying Sam, it's a bit like, um, it's a bit like, uh, when people are gone, have gone from MP3s back to vinyl. We're going back to vinyl, man, that's what we're doing. You know, we're just going, you know, we're no hipsters or, Hey, look, I'm listening to this through a, you know, one of those windup gramophone.

Oh, oh, this is old school. And I love it. God, listen to that. You can actually hear the scratches on the actual, uh, disc itself, you know? So I think that's where it's going. It's going backwards!

[00:10:04] **Andrew:** That's awesome. Uh, so, so now this is of course the most important question of the entire interview and, uh, obviously, please don't incriminate yourself, uh, if, if, uh, at all possible, but have you ever tried to blag your way in somewhere you didn't belong?

[00:10:22] **Sam:** I think the closest thing I've ever come to was, um, in my old house, um, where, when I lived with my parents, there was a pantry full of all

the sweets and goodies. And my mum would be like, Are you allowed to go in there? And I'd say, well, dad said I could. And then if my Dad said did your mom say you could go there and I'd always go. Yeah. Mum said I could, so I'd always play them against each other. And that was about the closest me getting into a pantry and stealings some chocolate

[00:10:53] **Andrew:** Winter?

[00:10:54] **Winter:** Right. Okay. So when I was 13, right. I, uh, I, that, I went to my first school disco, right? Yeah. Uh, when you went in there that was they, they used to have the, your UV light pen okay? Now back then, this is again, in the early nineties, they had those UV pens were very expensive. That was your entire night out if you bought one of them. However, you could get one of those. And then you just sold the, you just watch what the, the guy in the door drew on your hand and you just drew it on your hand and just do the tickets cheaper than everybody else was doing it. The, uh, the town hall. So we just got in for free and also pay for our multiple nights at the kids disco for the next like month or so until they changed it to raffle tickets.

Then we have to buy a raffle ticket thing, but Hey, look, you know, we all have the business going on. So we had to kind of like multiple blags on that until they just changed it to a different system.

[00:11:44] **Andrew:** I love it. Excellent. Uh, once again, thank you both so much for being part of this project. It was an absolute blast and we really do appreciate you sharing, uh, your time and your talent with, with us for this particular episode.

[00:12:03] **Sam:** No, it was a pleasure,

[00:12:04] **Winter:** pleasure working with you.

[00:12:05] **Sam:** Really enjoyed that. I enjoyed it.

[00:12:06] **Winter:** Great fun.

ANDREW: We hope you enjoyed this interview with the cast members of “Blag”. Stay tuned for an upcoming interview with Sophie Flack, the director of “Blag”. And join us next month for “Fairies”, by Adam Szudrich, and directed by Colette Cullen.

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