

Born in Birkenhead, an only child, my only connection with show business was my grandfather; he was a riding master of a travelling fairground, a member of the Showman's Guild and the man who inspired me. My parents often moved home including emigrating to New Zealand for five years! But my one constant in all this upheaval was my love of "the pictures", so my first action in any new town was to seek out the local cinema. The film industry had a fascination for me and I knew that it was where I wanted to be when I grew up.

I studied theatre at Hilton Bromley Academy of Dance and Drama, and on graduating I moved to London to find work. Initially I found work in light entertainment with Rolf Harris as part of a television dance group called the Young Generation. Following this I worked in theatre and television and became a very successful choreographer. But it was acting that was my real passion. So on a cold November morning I said goodbye to the choreographer and set off, in pursuit of my acting dream. I was determined to succeed and with hard graft plus a little luck, finally the work followed. I have played a variety of roles in television and theatre, including 'Coronation Street, Brookside, Mersey Beat, Shadow of the Noose, Love Hurts, The Bill to name a few and numerous other appearances in sitcoms, plays etc. To date I have appeared in over 65 film and television commercials. My career also took me to other areas of the acting Business. I was asked more and more to direct live shows. I remember one show I conceived and produced, involved a cast of 283 performers and played to two audiences of 12,500 each.

It was whilst I was directing, for the third year, the Casting directors and Agents Christmas Pantomime, in the 1980's, that I was approached by Ros and John Hubbard of Hubbard Casting, to freelance for them as a Director of Castings, running casting sessions for TV, film and commercials. Over the following years the experience I gained, of directing actors during the audition process and working as an actor myself, put me in a unique position of being able to find solutions to the repetitive problems that occur time after time on both sides of the camera, and gave me valuable knowledge of what the industry employers are looking for. These insights I wanted to share with fellow actors.

One thing lead to another and from 1996 I was invited to teach professionally at some of London's most influential, hard working and successful acting establishments Including The Actors Centre, The London Actors Workshop' City Lit. Inst, and The Actors' Studio (Pinewood & London) and with that came numerous requests for private one to one audition coaching which continue to this day.

I always like to hear feedback from my students and one in particular comes to mind. I asked a student recently how he had benefitted from our session and he replied.

'You have given me the best chance of getting this job'.

This response struck a nerve with me because it summed up so neatly what I have been doing for the last 20 years. So whether you are a complete beginner or a household name, my one to one audition coaching under studio conditions will, I believe, give you the best chance of getting that job!

John Melaine

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