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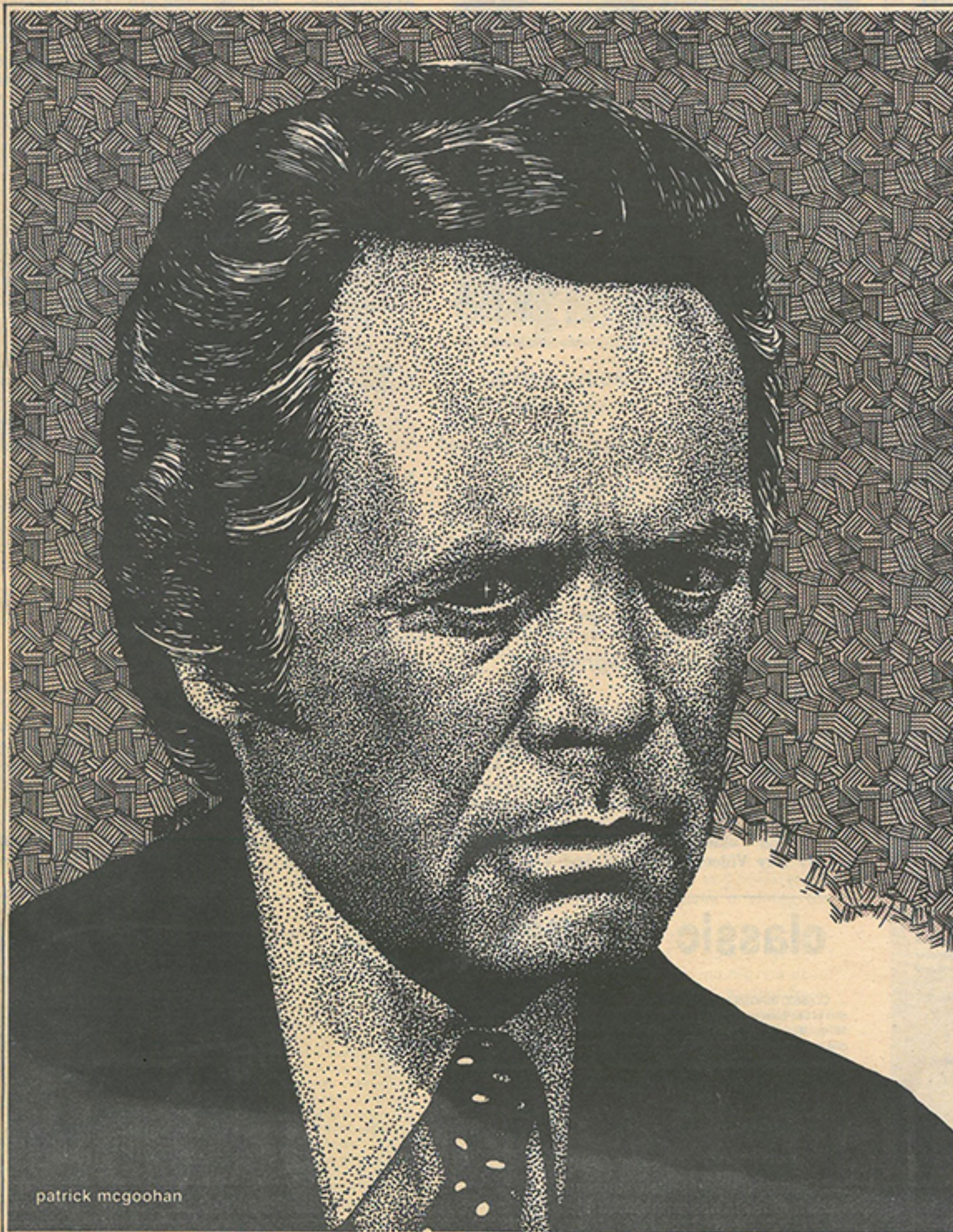
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patrick mcgoohan

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## in conversation with patrick mcgoohan

by barbara pruet

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Patrick McGooohan's voice on the phone was cordial, but businesslike. It was also clear, strong. Different from the average voice. I had written asking for an interview. He would be in New York in a few days on business: did I want to do the interview there? We could set the time and place now. What day did I prefer; he was flexible since he knew I had to work. Unless I heard from him; I should meet him at the time and place we arranged. Cordial, businesslike, not given to small talk.

The interview took place in New York over a two-day period. A total of five hours. His hair was temporarily lighter than usual, still showing some of the effects of being dyed white for his recent role in the CBS movie *Of Pure Blood*. He dresses casually and wears glasses. His clothes and manner don't draw undue attention. If you were looking directly at him on a crowded New York street, you would recognize him; otherwise, he would fade into the moving throng.

He shows up on time. Always. And he's easy to talk with.

**1928-1948: The Early Years and the Shaping of the Future.**

It will briefly surprise many readers to find out that popular British/American actor Patrick McGooohan was born in New York City, the Astoria district on Long Island, to be exact, on March 19, 1928. Once past this initial eyebrow raiser, his story continues to be an intriguing one throughout. There's a lot to learn about the man.

His parents immigrated to the United States and, within a few months after his birth, decided to return to Ireland. They settled in County Leitrim, and by all accounts his early childhood was a financially impoverished one on a family farm that produced little on poor soil.

My parents came here (to New York), Irish immigrants trying to make a living. My father had inherited a farm in Ireland, in the destitute part. "Destitute" is a strong word, but it wasn't highly productive then.

So they moved to New York. Mother worked as a dressmaker at Macy's for three years in addition to my father working. And I suppose they made good money for those days. My father still had a hankering for the land and, since they had saved some money, about the time I was six months old, they moved back to the little farm. The money that was saved was



**Tv's Secret Agent.**

put into it, but things got hard again. It was tough living there. So after about seven or eight years, we moved again ... this time to Sheffield, England.

Our family was very close. I had four sisters, and we were always doing something. My mother taught us all how to make our own clothes. We didn't have much money, but it didn't matter. She didn't call me Patrick; she called me Patrick Joseph. It was a pretty normal childhood, I think.

I went to a local school in Sheffield; we were evacuated during the war. During that time, I went to a private boys' school with four other boys from Sheffield, all with pretty much the same background as myself. We had scholarships and evacuation allowances. After that, I went to work in the steel mills in Sheffield.

I didn't graduate from high school. I got what you call a school certificate, the equivalent of a diploma. I took and passed the exams to go to Oxford, but then decided I didn't want to go.

### An Early Coming of Age

In 1944, at age 16, he left school and held a series of jobs over the next few years. At this point, he became ill with bronchial asthma and spent six months in bed. Once recovered, he applied for work at the Sheffield Repertory Company. He was still under twenty.

I worked in the steel mills, in a bank for about nine months, ran a chicken farm for a while; and then I got the job at the Sheffield Playhouse as the general stage manager.

During all of the steel mill work, banking, and chicken farming, I was in five different amateur theatrical companies, so I was acting all of the time. I started out at the St. Vincent's Youth Center in Sheffield. There was a wonderful man there, one of the best directors who ever lived ... that I've had in my life ... by the name of James Lodge. He owned the steel mill and ran the amateur theatrical association. If he had been a professional, he would have been famous. Some of the best things I've ever done was at that youth center. It's not hindsight or glamorizing it; I've never done anything like that since.

I had never decided I wanted to be an actor, ever. I didn't know what I wanted to be. I didn't go to Oxford, but I have no regrets about that. I didn't really know what I wanted to do. If I'd gone on with steel work and worked in the mills, the sales department, and other areas, I'd have gone on to a higher position. But I decided not to do that. And the chicken farm was altogether different from the banking job. Running after (and taking care of) 15,000 or 20,000 chickens is all blood and tears! You did it all yourself.

### 1948-1959: Hard Work, Love, and A Quick Success

McGoohan took the job as stage manager at Sheffield and for a while did every type of work needed to keep the company going. He eventually

got the chance to play small parts in the plays that were being produced; and he could learn the basics of acting under a master, Geoffrey Ost, the Director of the Company. Within two years he was a leading player. He also met a young actress with the company, Joan Drummond. They married May 19, 1951, between a rehearsal of *The Taming of the Shrew* and a performance of *The Rivals*. They did 24 plays a year at Sheffield: Shaw, Shakespeare, Chekhov, Coward. He said he was a rather good Petruchio and preferred the lighter Shakespearean roles. He estimates that he appeared in at least 200 plays during all of these early years.

I enjoyed the job as stage manager ... putting the plays together. As to how I got on stage, it was the usual story ... an actor took sick with appendicitis; and, since I was prompting the man, I knew the part so I went on and performed the role. By the next season I was a full fledged actor. After that, I went on to London.

It was hard work. It was very simple ... that's the main thing ... extremely hard work. It was satisfying work.

One night you were playing a butler, the next night you were playing Hamlet. And my wife had to play a maid one week and the next week she was Saint Joan.

When Geoffrey decided who would get the parts, he never told anybody ... never had a discussion with any of the actors ... the list would just go up on the bulletin board on Saturday afternoon. I know because I was the stage manager, and I would nail it up. We would go to see what we were playing. That's the first time we heard. All of her life my wife wanted to play Saint Joan. She had gone to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, and this was one of her ambitions. She knew the play was coming up. But I told her, "You may find out the other girl, Marguerite, could get the part, and if she does, that's it. You'll have to get through it until another part you want comes along." But as it happened Geoffrey decided she was right for the part; and Marguerite — then Joan had to go and comfort her! But then, you see, Marguerite got a marvelous part a little later on. That's the way the man balanced things out.

Sheffield itself was a stimulating place to live, apart from the steel mill part. One didn't make a lot of money, but it wasn't a headache because you had enough to live on. I was quite happy. Joan and I used to bicycle out to the countryside on Sundays for a picnic. From that point of view, it was a perfect sort of existence really. I can't think of anything bad about it. I keep thinking, "Now what was bad about it?" Nothing! It wasn't! I can't think of anything bad! You didn't have the time.

You didn't need an agent, you didn't need a business manager, you didn't need a lawyer.



**Patrick McGooohan as the Prisoner.**



**The Gentleman and The Gypsy (1958).**



Now I have them all.

Three other couples got married at that time so you can see it was a pretty good outfit.

I'm proud of my work there, REALLY proud of it.

A reviewer in 1955 commented about his Sheffield training: "How well he studied there can be seen in his performance now at the Garrick Theatre (in *Serious Charge*). The role of Howard Phillips may not have great depth, but it demands an actor with a wide range, capable of bringing out many facets of character. Patrick McGoochan skillfully makes him an upright man of high Christian ideals without once making him appear priggish, and he exploits the moments of comedy to the full with his excellent timing." ("Tomorrow's Lead," *Plays and Players*, May, 1955, p. 20.)

By the mid-1950s, he had become established as a lead player on prestige stages at the West End in plays such as *Moby Dick* (1955), *Serious Charge* (1955), and *Ring For Catty* (1956). He was also moving into television, taking feature roles in episodes of regular series, including *The Vise* and *You Are There*, as well as a number of BBC-TV plays.

One notable success was the part of Starbuck in *Moby Dick*, *Rehearsed*, a play adapted from Melville's book by Orson Welles and with Welles in the starring role of Ahab. The reviews? From the *New York Post* (7-12-55): "... There is a fine portrayal of Starbuck, the mate who fights against Ahab's mad fanaticism, by Patrick McGoochan, a first-rate actor, who, while the star's performance remains a work in progress, is giving the ablest characterization of the evening." And another review: "... Patrick McGoochan as Starbuck, the mate who dares to oppose Ahab's will, is Melville's long, earnest man" to the life, whittled out of immemorial teak. His is the best performance of the evening." (Tynan, Kenneth. "Sea-Change," *The Observer*, London, Sunday Edition, June 19, 1955.)

The play was a fantastic production, and it was wonderful to work with him. I got to know him pretty well. He felt that the production was the best thing he'd done since his early years. But it is true that Orson was never completely satisfied with his own performance.

We actually filmed that. Most people don't know about that. No one has ever seen it or knows where it is. It's hidden somewhere: it may still exist. We filmed his stuff (Ahab) and my stuff (Starbuck).

We were filming scenes in the theatre in London with a whole film crew. We were filming everything but our parts. I went up to him one day and said: "When are we going to film our stuff?" He said: "Not here, Italy." "In Italy?" I had never been to Italy. We finished and still hadn't filmed our stuff, apart from the crowd scenes, which involved the other people. I said: "Orson, when?" "I'll call you," he said. Eventually I got a call: "Still standing by?" Yes. "Well, stand by longer." I hung around for another five weeks and eventually got a telegram to come to the Milan airport on a specific flight.

I spent three weeks with him in Milan shooting our stuff. It was talking with him that was so great! I remember one of the conversations we had. He said: "What do you think is the most dangerous thing on earth?" I knew it wasn't *The Bomb*. Welles said: "Television." That's what he thought was the most dangerous thing on earth.

I went down to the studio one day to look around. I was looking for Orson, and I found him on the stage (the stage we were rehearsing on the day before) and heard him carrying on a conversation with someone. I peeked around the corner to see. I see two chairs, an empty table, and a huge placard from a bullfight. And there's Orson talking to an empty chair; having a conversation with it. And the cameras are going. And I watched this for a moment. And I never said anything, just sneaked off and had lunch. I didn't want to say: "I thought you had a good time talking with this person about 'Moby Dick' —" The talk to the empty chair was about bullfighting!

So, after lunch I went around looking for him



Stage and BBC tv hit *Brand*.

again. Someone said: "He's in the screening room." So, I crept into the back of the screening room, and there were rushes! Of the shots we had filmed. I stayed when the lights went down and saw about forty-five minutes of them. And when they were done and the lights came one, he turned around and saw me and went berserk. BERSERK! "What are you doing here! I don't want ANYONE to see this! I said: 'But Orson, it's fantastic. FANTASTIC!' He said: 'It's not done yet.' So, I've seen a few minutes of it. It's an extraordinary piece of film and no one's seen it."

He owed money to the film company in England who financed it; apparently they confiscated the film. It's either in a vault somewhere or destroyed.

Regarding the bullfighting thing. That turned out to be his part of a conversation with Kenneth Tynan, the critic, who was not there. They filmed the other half in England, with Tynan, who didn't know he was going to be in it! That's Orson.

Wherever Welles was going, he was doing something. He would go off and shoot these things, these reels of film ... miles of film, that no one has ever seen. Amazing man.

In 1955, Patrick McGoochan appeared in his first film, *Passage Home* (a bit part) and quickly followed with other small parts in *I Am A Camera* (1955), *The Dam Busters* (1955), *The Warrior* (1955, also titled *The Dark Avenger*) a film that was Errol Flynn's last swashbuckler, and a supporting part in *Zarak* (1956).



*Hell Drivers* — 1958

The production title for the Flynn movie was called "The Black Prince" when it was shot. I don't know whatever happened to it. I never saw it. Originally, I had two days work.

An interesting anecdote about that was that I was playing Sir Oswald, and there was another fellow who was playing the head peasant. He had a HUGE role, he was there every day. But, because he was the peasant and I was the titled nobleman, when it came to lunchtime ... there were two tents; one for the peasants and the crowd actors and a smaller tent for the producer and director, Errol, and some of the leading actors. The first day I was there, when we broke for lunch, this black limousine pulled up. I asked John, "Why is that car here?" As it turns out, they were sent to pick up someone called Sir Oswald! "It was me!" Because I was called Sir Oswald, a car was sent to take me to their tent and dear old John, who was playing this huge role, was with the peasants. Fiction had become reality.

Recognition was coming early, but not without considerable effort. By this time, he was able to put together a strong mix of stage, tv, and screen credits; and in 1957 he became a contract actor for the Rank Organization, a major film company in England, and moved up into lead roles in films.

The Rank films generally brought good reviews and increasing popularity. The first was *High Tide At Noon* (1957) in which he played Simon Breck, an aggressive troublemaker in a secluded fishing village. This was followed by *Hell Drivers* (1958) with a dynamic part that caught the attention of most reviewers. In another "villain" part he played Red, a vicious truck driver foreman for a gravel company. Also in this film, in smaller roles, were a couple of actors destined for future success: Sean Connery and David McCallum.

In 1959, two more Rank films were released, *The Gypsy and the Gentleman* and *Elephant Gun* (also titled *Nor The Moon By Night*). Of the films he was to make for Rank, *Elephant Gun* was the only one with a positive character. An adventure story filmed in Africa, his character carried the brunt of the action. Together, these two films contain what would turn out to be the rarest of film footage, a little on-screen passion or romance. The brief footage contained several passionate scenes with Melina Mercouri as Jess, her dominating lover, in *Gypsy* and an on-screen kiss in the last few minutes of *Elephant Gun* as the story of a love triangle is happily resolved.

At the same time he was making the Rank films, he starred in a number of BBC-TV live plays; and it was in large part these performances that brought the recognition that served as the stepladder to his first television series.

The Ibsen play *Brand* brought special meaning to Patrick McGoochan's career in a way that lasts to this day. It's a story of Brand, a pastor of emotional depth and a driving inner force dedicated to living with uncompromising commitment to his values, regardless of personal cost. McGoochan achieved critical success, winning the London Drama Critics Award for his performance (*Variety*, 7/8/59). He repeated the role later in the year on a special BBC-TV broadcast of the play. It has been suggested by more than one author that if you want to understand Patrick McGoochan as a person, you should start by reading "Brand."

There was a whole string of the live television plays. They were exciting for the same reason the Sheffield plays were ... you had to work so hard. They were good plays and the days of live drama were exciting. When you were in the studio and it said "vision on," you knew if you did anything wrong people might see it. No second takes, no rushes. And what that does to the adrenaline is just fantastic! And the performance is done on a level of nervous energy that you don't get when you are working on film and can do scenes over.

The tapes of these plays don't exist anymore; BBC-TV burns its old tape after eight years. The one I really would have liked to survive was "Brand." And I inquired about it. It was destroyed after eight years like all of the rest. I wouldn't have minded if they had destroyed a little soap opera or something, but this is a classic play, hardly ever done. And to see that play done properly, which it was ... never mind about my-



self ... but everything about it was good. They should NOT have destroyed it. It should have been kept for somebody to see. That's the only one I would like to have kept for my children and grandchildren to see. I took tremendous pleasure in it.

All of the plays I did, all the training, really came together in that one. And, frankly, it was the last thing I did in the theatre before I did the play here. And that's one of the reasons I didn't do any more plays. I thought: "That one, for the time being, is what I want to have on the boards, that piece of work."

The play was bigger than me. I found it to be bigger than Lear. Lear spent a lot of time in the wings. People talk about Lear as being a most exhaustive part ... the thing I found most exhausting was the hangin' around so much! "When can I get on and do my part!" But in "Brand" you start strong in the beginning and keep going UP? On stage the whole time! It's such an extraordinary piece of work. The crying out to be "all or nothing!" People are scared of it. It's hard. That's why I'm sorry it was destroyed.

Question: Is there some Brand in you?

The parallel is there, certainly the "all or nothing" business.

In the same year he was recognized as Britain's top stage actor, he was also named "Best TV Actor of the Year" for his starring role as the first man on the moon in the BBC-TV play *The Greatest Man In The World*. Adapted from a James Thurber short story, in a humorous twist, this "hero" turns out to be a shiftless, dumb, nobody who soon becomes an embarrassment to the government.

Another BBC-TV play, however, Clifford Odets' *The Big Knife* (1959), was of more immediate importance to his career, leading to an offer from Lew Grade to do the *Danger Man* series. The play was reviewed by *Variety* (1-21-59): "The presentation can hardly be faulted on any count and may

be ranked as one of the gems of British teledrama. Acting was maintained at a high standard by the entire cast, but special mention must be made of the performances of Patrick McGeehan as Charlie Castle, the movie star with a load of problems and Louise Albritton as his wife."

Why did Lew Grade pick him for the role of John Drake? After seeing McGeehan's performance in *The Big Knife*, he was convinced he had found the right man for the part. Grade is quoted as saying: "It was the way he moved. He moved like a panther — firm and decisive." Along similar lines, reviewer Hank Johnson once commented: "His mannerisms, movements, and voice were always those of a mature actor. Even in his earliest work, he moved as an actor much older than his actual years." And, of course, by this time McGeehan had a strong following of fans and a solid reputation as one of England's best young actors. He had also acquired a reputation as an especially bright but outspoken "angry young man" and was openly unhappy as a contract actor for Rank. One critic later commented that McGeehan had been a rebel in the industry and a "method actor" long before the actions of James Dean popularized the term.

1960-1969. From "Danger Man" to "The Prisoner"

*Danger Man* came about as a part of Lew Grade's package of series designed to sell in both the British and the American market, where the real money was. Grade had formed ITC (The Independent Television Corporation) for the purpose of developing shows that would appeal to audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. Among the talented people he had working for him was Ralph Smart. Smart devised, wrote, directed, and finally became the producer of a series called *The Invisible Man* for Grade a couple of years earlier, which was the first series with a British intelligence agent as the central character. Called upon to create a new concept for a series, Smart came up with John Drake and *Danger Man*. Made in 1960 and 1961 (and shown in the U.S. in 1961), the series didn't create much attention in the Ameri-

can market. However, the series established the direction and theme for what a few years later would become the highly successful *Secret Agent* series.

Main character John Drake worked for NATO as a special security agent and was free to travel the world working on special problems for free world governments. The story lines set an early precedent for nonviolence, preferring to have Drake use his wits and his fists rather than a gun.

I'd have been quite happy at Sheffield if I'd been able to make enough of a living to bring up my children. But the series came along and I wanted things for my children, so I thought I'd go where the money was. It had nothing to do with ambition at all. I've never had ambition, or drive. When I wanted to do "The Prisoner," I wanted to do a good job on the ideas, and then I found the right place for it. Now, if one calls that ambition, "I want to do this the way I see it," ... one might call that ambition, I don't. I thought, if things go right, I might get a little pension out of this. And then I can go do what I want. After having got the pension, then I'm free to be off; that was the idea. A very, very stupid way to think. Because then I got locked into a mold, that was the reason. But once into it (the series), I got interested in it.

Secret agents don't have much principle, and I wanted to have some. It was a completely different series when we started. I remember reading the first script. It was all about this John Drake character, and he was after a secret document in a safe behind a picture that was over a bed. He's lying on the bed with a girl and in order to move the picture to get to the safe, he has to roll over the girl. Sort of "Excuse me, sweetheart," and then roll back. That was the first script! And he also shot three people. Of course, that was all changed, and we didn't do any of it.

He was an agent who never carried a gun, never shot anyone. He used his wits instead. He didn't go around knocking people off, and he didn't go to bed with a different girl in each of

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the 39 episodes. My theory was very simple. It was quite a while ago, and then I felt that television was a guest in one's home and should behave like a guest. Of course, now you can get anything on television. I'm not saying that television can't offend at all, but the area of offense should be carefully guarded. So therefore, for young children watching "Secret Agent" I'd rather they saw a hero rather than an antihero. That's what I tried to go for.

McGoohan influenced the program from the start. The themes of morality and individuality fit in with his personal philosophy as well as his vision of what the character John Drake was supposed to be. As both a moral and opinionated man, McGoohan held strong views and was forceful about seeing that they were carried out. He had insisted at the very first meeting on the script for the first episode that the bedroom scene be cut out. In fact, he stipulated that romantic involvements would have to be eliminated if he were to play the role, and consequently none appeared in either this series or the Secret Agent series that followed. Nor did any such relationships appear in The Prisoner series.

One episode of the series, *Vacation*, afforded McGoohan an early chance at directing, a skill he was to develop more fully on future projects. Another episode, *A View from the Villa*, was filmed at Portmeirion in Wales and so impressed him that he made it the surreal location for *The Prisoner* in 1966/67.

It should come as no surprise that when McGoohan was offered the role as the first James Bond, he turned it down — several times — as being incompatible with the type of role he wanted to play. He says it was a decision he has never regretted.

The story behind that; there were a lot of reasons. "Danger Man" was very big in England at the time so it would appear obvious I might get asked to do it.

The James Bond thing became what it was, not by design, but largely by accident. When



Patrick McGoohan in Rare 1960 photo.

that film was first made, they weren't quite sure what to do with it. They didn't think it was that great and then when it "hit" ... of course, now it's beginning 20 years and could go on forever. It doesn't matter who's in it because they (the audience) will buy a ticket for the sake of seeing pretty girls, great sex, exotic locations, and great action sequences. It's just pure entertainment. It's great! A good deal! Why didn't I do it?

I didn't think it was a very good script. I was getting a lot of scripts then, and it was just another. I'd read the Bond books, you see. And I

thought "This has got nothing to do with James Bond." The REAL James Bond, which I found fascinating. The real Bond, the character in the book, has nothing to do with a lot of this. He had some interesting concepts about him; none of that was in the script. It was just the girls and the guns and the villains ... and the stunts. That's what it was, and that's what it still is. I didn't think much of the script. That's the top and bottom of it, really. No regrets whatsoever.

I was asked again when they changed over this time. Unless I played the aging father of Bond, there's no way for me to do it now.

A sort of quiet laughter comes along with the words.

After the end of *Danger Man* in 1961, over the next couple of years McGoohan went on to turn out some especially fine films and appear in televised plays of note. In 1961 he appeared in *All Night Long* (a film with an Othello theme) playing an arrogant and neurotic jazz band drummer willing to do whatever it takes to get the backing for his own band.

I actually played the drums in the film, learned three pieces for that. It took me four months. Almost drove my family crazy! I had a set of drums in the garage and practiced relentlessly. A fellow pre-recorded my part of the music, and I had the recording to work with. The trouble was that at one point it needed to be re-recorded; he must have done it under the influence of some chemical, I don't know what it was, but it came out nearly twice as fast! Fortunately, I was so familiar with it I was able to keep up! At the playback, I said "What happened?" He was getting bored, so he changed it.

It was fun. I enjoyed that part of it.

I spent lunch hour with the guys, the jazz musicians, Dave Brubeck. On the lunch break, that was when we should have been shooting! You can't force a playback. You have to improvise, you don't analyze, you just do it. That's

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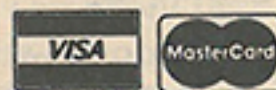
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what jazz is all about.

It was supposed to be shot in 24 hours, to get the feeling of the story. At the end of the tape, we had the stage struck up. The cigarettes were all around and the fumes. The place should be full of fumes and cigarette butts all over the floor, and liquor. Within that atmosphere the overnight feeling could happen. It was supposed to go all ... night ... long.

Another film, *Two Living, One Dead* (Sweden, 1961) provided a dramatic and tense role as a bank clerk who survived a robbery only to be criticized for not risking his life for the money that was taken. The role offered the chance to play a part with more psychological depth than previously as the film explores the mental strain on his character and his family as his confidence in his actions is shaken with time and community attitudes. McGooohan calls the director, Anthony Asquith, one of the best he ever worked with. In 1962, *Walk In The Shadow* (also titled *Life For Ruth*) was a highly rated film that explored the conflict between the right to practice individual religious beliefs with the rights of society and other individuals. McGooohan played the role of Dr. James Brown, a physician faced with seeing a child die because her father's religion forbade blood transfusions. The film version of the serious and emotional Brendan Behan play *The Quare Fellow* was next, with McGooohan in the lead role as Thomas Crimmin, a young prison guard getting his first real experience and who changes his mind about capital punishment. Two films for Walt Disney Studios followed: *The Three Lives of Thomasina* (1962) and *Dr. Syn, Alias the Scarecrow* (1963; also shown on American television as the three part *Scarecrow of Romney Marsh*). And there were more BBC-TV plays of note: *Dead Secret* (1961), *The Prisoner* (1962. No relation to the future series), and *The Shadow of a Pale Horse* (1962).

By the time *Danger Man* resumed production in 1964, spy stories were all the rage; and the series became a big hit. Shown in England under the previous title, it became *Secret Agent* in the

United States and debuted in 1965. The formula for the series went through a slight metamorphosis; John Drake was now a secret agent for England instead of NATO, and the series was expanded to an hour in length. It was recognized as being a classy show. It had original and good plots, a popular theme song, and well written background music, excellent production techniques, exceptional camera work, and unusually good acting. And especially it had McGooohan's strong and stylish performance. As an actor, by now McGooohan had carved out a voice and style all his own.

As before, John Drake was a loner, an individual, and amoral character. McGooohan is quoted: "I wanted Drake to be in the heroic mold like a classic western hero. Which meant he had to be a good man. I see Drake as a man of high ideals, with a passionate belief in the dignity of mankind."

By 1966 McGooohan had grown tired of *Secret Agent* and felt the program was beginning to repeat itself. While on the one hand announcing that he was quitting the show, he also approached Lew Grade about doing something a little different and proposed to him a limited-episode series called *The Prisoner*. At the time, McGooohan was rumored to be the highest paid television star in England and *Secret Agent* was one of the most popular shows. This gave McGooohan the status and power he needed to get the backing for the series he really wanted to do and the free rein to control its every aspect.

Patrick McGooohan said of *The Prisoner*: "I believe passionately in the freedom of the individual, and *The Prisoner* is basically about the dehumanizing, the loss of individuality, which is happening to us all. People are the prisoners of our society. The series is a comment about life. The *Prisoner* idea was with me for many years before I put it together with Portmeirion and decided to do the series. The general theme of the man in isolation against authority and bureaucracy, the idea of being a rebel against suppression and stupid rules has been with me since I was able to start thinking about anything at all. This was not

an action-adventure show. It was an allegory. An allegory is a story in which people, places, happenings, hide and conceal a message. There is symbolism. It gives you a great deal of latitude to do anything you want as long as you are true to the story within its general theme." ("The L.A. Tape"; *Six Of One, The Prisoner Appreciation Society*, Issue Number 3, Spring, 1985, pp. 12-15)

*The Prisoner* started production in 1966 and was not an easy success. The expression of ideas and the development of a concept not easily understood or accepted by co-workers or industry colleagues made it difficult to keep on track.

One of the problems was that it was too long, for the first thing. It should have been shorter. It was originally planned to be seven episodes but became seventeen.

The hardest part, I suppose, was keeping the people who were writing the other scripts in line with the thinking instead of peeling off in another direction. For instance, I had wanted to see Number 6 get out of the place at least twice. He did, in fact, "apparently" get out in one episode and did get out in another and got all the way back to London, to his house, and then tried to find out "Where is this Village?" I didn't have time to write it myself ("Many Happy Returns") so I just jotted down a couple of pages, a sort of skeleton chart, and then somebody else wrote it. And he wrote that when Number 6 gets away, gets out of this place, he gets picked up by a fishing trawler ... and this chap wrote in ... that there was a Russian princess on it, and there was a sort of romantic liaison between the two!

That's just a small instance. I had to explain: "That's extraneous." Everything has to be in this continuing line and related to the goals, objectives, and all the other little things that goes into an episodic series. All of the scripts were supposed to go through me; in a few instances, they didn't. It was a matter of such short time.

I was acting in virtually every shot, and that

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took up a certain time of the day, from 7:00 in the morning to 6:30 at night. And then I was writing as well, and I was directing. And supervising, and editing the incoming scripts, and editing in the cutting room. So, it didn't leave much time. By virtue of that pressure, certain things were skimmed here and there. As little as possible, but some got through.

One didn't have the luxury of time that one would have had on a feature film. Of course, it came out while we were still making it so one had to meet air dates. A little pressure from that point of view. Which was good, I think. It was healthy. I liked it. It was a constant emotional high just to keep on top of it. Stimulating!

**Question:** Did you feel that the end product came out like you had envisioned it at the start?

Quite a bit of it. Yes. A surprising amount in view of the fact it was television. At the beginning of the production, I said to the crew, who were all friends of mine I had worked with three or four years on the other series, "Nobody on this set mentions the word television." They knew I was serious. So, we didn't talk about television. Because once you start talking about it, people's thinking changes.

You can make a movie for theatrical release which costs, let's say, five million dollars. You take the same movie, the same script, the same budget, the same people in it, and say, "We are going to make a 'movie of the week' for television," and ALL of the thinking changes. Because you have introduced that one word, "television." Then shortcuts come into mind. "We can get away with this on television," that's a favorite line. I've heard it, and I go berserk! I say "WHY! How, WHY can you get away with it! We don't want to get away with it! Fix it! Make it right."

"It will do" is another one. "It will do ... next shot." "It wasn't quite right, but we can get away with it. Print it." All of the time. With rare exceptions; there are obvious exceptions. But as a general rule, that's the attitude.

**Question:** You had the chance in *The Prisoner* to do it your way?

Yes. But that was made very clear from the start. I had seven scripts on the desk before we started. I don't know of that ever happening before in a television series. It meant we could go to one location for three weeks and shoot everything we needed for ALL the episodes. We could have enough library material by getting some extra shots, people walking from there to here, and here to there. That way we didn't have to go back to location.

**Question:** Who has all that now?

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McGoohan with Janet Munroe and Michael Craig in *Walk In The Shadow* (Life For Ruth).

I guess the negatives are probably in the archives at Eastman in London under the ownership of ITC.

**Question:** But it probably has been saved?

I don't know what the rule is about that. It's for a very long time; but, of course, it's been a long time. It might be interesting to find out.

**Question:** Did you like wearing all of those different hats?

Yes. But I like to be able to delegate the business aspects to a line producer. But the directing, I had directed before that. I had directed in the theatre, and I'd done some writing. And, of course, during the making of "Secret Agent," I directed some of those.

I liked the total involvement. I'm not very happy just doing peripheral tasks. I like TOTAL involvement. I don't necessarily mean I want to be the boss; that's the last thing I want. But if it's necessary to run something in order to achieve the finished product, I like that sort of involvement. So that one is working as near as one can get to 24 hours a day. I like that, the feeling of achievement.

The working with new ideas, I think that's wonderful. But one can only do it in spurts or you burn out.

McGoohan was the star and executive producer, as well as a frequent director and writer; the creative force and controlling hand of a series that was in large part his concept. An able production team was assembled from the previous series. McGoohan wrote a number of the episodes, using several pseudonyms as well as his own name during the course of the work. Paddy Fitz and Archibald Schwartz are two that he has acknowledged. The Schwartz name was on the first draft of the script *Once Upon A Time* but had been replaced by McGoohan's real name by the time the credits appeared on the completed episode. One episode was directed under the name of Joseph Serf.

The series debuted in England in 1967 and in the United States in June, 1968, to unusual and mixed reviews. Now universally recognized as either "the best series ever on television" or "one of the best ...," at that time it was reviewed as being truly unique, but also puzzling and obscure. Not only did the series tend not to tie up loose ends, it deliberately asked questions for which it supplied no clear answers for the viewing audience. The final episode (*Fallout*) brought criticism and even outrage and anger. It was called futuristic, Orwellian, Kafkaesque ... but mostly people couldn't put a label on it, admitting that nothing like it had ever been done before.

Somewhat overlooked in the strong dominating force of the show was the brilliant mind it took to put it together ... and in such a way that it is ageless. McGoohan has to some extent explained how the series was conceived and developed (the Troyer interview on Canadian television in 1978 is the most in-depth single recounting) but has said little about how he arrived at his ideas over the years. Very much a self-educated man, his ideas and concepts used as the basis for the series clearly came from an original thinker. In a 1985 interview with Tom Soter, McGoohan explained

his feelings about education: "The right sort of education enables one to think original thoughts. There are people who know something about every subject under the sun. But they are just a reference library. Knowing too much stuff, that is closing up your mind. You will find that all the great inventors — Edison, Bell — I can't think of one who was highly educated. The exploration of their mind wasn't surrounded by too much education. The mind is set free. The innate power of creation was there. (Soter, Tom. "Secret Agent Man"; Video Magazine, July, 1985. pp. 94-95, 128)

For in-depth writings about the series, the best place to start would be the world-wide Prisoner Appreciation Society. Authorized by ITC; and with McGoohan lending his name as Honorary President, the group puts out a professionally produced quarterly publication that includes special articles, correspondence and debate between members, and photos from the ITC files. Occasionally they include some "Secret Agent" material. (The name and address of the American Representative is Bruce Clark, P.O. Box 172, Hatfield, PA 19440.)

(Cont'd. next issue)

## sony video schedules acclaimed vietnam tv series for april

The critically acclaimed 13-hour "Vietnam: A Television History," which won six Emmy Awards when it aired on PBS television will be released by Sony Video on videocassette in April.

A specially designed deluxe "collector's" boxed set of the entire series will be available. In addition, six two-hour videocassettes and the final one-hour program will be available individually priced.

The series follows the events of the Vietnam War from the 1945 revolution against the French to the U.S. evacuation of Saigon in April, 1975. The project, which took six years to complete, provides a detailed visual and oral account of the war.

When this unique historical document was televised (in 1983), more than 200 colleges and universities developed courses, offered for credit, based on the broadcasts. Stanley Karnow, chief correspondent to the series, authored a companion book based on his 30 years of reporting on the French and American wars in Indochina. Entitled "Vietnam: A History," it stayed on the New York Times best seller list for more than three months and sold over 200,000 copies.

*Vietnam: A Television History* includes the following two-hour videocassettes: Volume 1 "The Roots of War"/"The First Vietnam" 1946-1954; Volume 2 "America's Mandarin" 1954-1963/"LBJ Goes To

War" 1964-1965; Volume 3 "America Takes Charge" 1965-1967/"America's Enemy" 1954-1967; Volume 4 "Tet" 1968/"Vietnamizing The War" 1969-1973; Volume 5 "No Neutral Ground: Cambodia and Laos"/"Peace Is At Hand," Volume 6 "Homefront USA"/"The End of the Tunnel" 1973-1975 and the final one hour videocassette of the episode broadcast on December 20, 1983 — Volume 7 "Legacies."

*Vietnam: A Television History* is the centerpiece of Sony Video Software's *Vietnam Video Collection* which features *Television's Vietnam — Impact of Media*/"The Real Story": a two hour analysis narrated and hosted by Charlton Heston. This simultaneous release of the highly controversial rebuttal to *Vietnam: A Television History* is a unique event.

The *Vietnam Video Collection* also includes the one hour *Soldiers In Hiding*; the 90 minute *A Program For Vietnam Veterans ... And Everyone Else Who Should Care* hosted by Charles Haid (Renko of *Hill Street Blues*); *Vietnam Requiem* which runs 48 minutes and finally, *Missing In Action*, a documentary about the search for the American and Allied service men who remain missing and unaccounted for in Vietnam.

This month Sony is offering *Second Chance*, *Bouquet of Barbed Wire*, *Little Women* "Jo's Boyfriend," *Gibson Jazz Concert* and *We Like The Blues*, Vol. 1 and 2.



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cover by tony crnkovich



in conversation with

## patrick mcgoohan — 2

by barbara pruet

1970-1985. A Focus On Films And Starting Life In America.

A two-year period of personal and professional transition followed the release of *The Prisoner*. Citing the inability to keep fans away from his home, hounding by the British press, and exhaustion from two years of nearly around-the-clock work, he moved his family to Switzerland in an effort to find some privacy.

In a joint interview for an article in the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* in 1983, Patrick and Joan McGoohan talked warmly about their life together and openly about the problems they faced then. The McGoohans had to contend with telephoto lenses at their gate and peering eyes from the top windows of passing double decker buses, which she describes as like a tour going by. Unfortunately, their home in Mill Hill (on the northern outskirts of London) was below road level, and passing traffic could gaze into their windows at ease. Joan: "When Patrick was doing *Danger Man* and *The Prisoner* he was the number one, and they wouldn't leave us alone. The British press were awful. Everybody knew we lived there, that was the spot. There was nowhere for us to hide." (McNicholas, Marie. "Former *Danger Man* dons an apron ...": *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*, February 28, 1983, pp. 20-21.)

Off of the screen for much of this period, he spent most of his time in Switzerland with his family and his wife's parents who lived there. There were a few trips back to England to deal with business regarding the production of eight African documentaries. *Ice Station Zebra* was



McGoohan in *Mary Queen of Scots* (1971).

released to good reviews but had actually been made during the final stages of *The Prisoner*. He introduced, but did not appear in, a couple of episodes of the *Journey Into Darkness* television series.

"*Ice Station Zebra*" was the first time I ever worked in Hollywood. It was a very pleasant experience. It was at the end of the really good MGM era. I couldn't believe it. John Sturges, who directed it, was an absolute gentleman. And Rock Hudson ... all I can say about Rock Hudson is that he was a big star in Hollywood and I was a guy from England doing my first job in Hollywood, and I was treated by him with absolute courtesy. A gentleman. The film was a pleasure to make, but I think its biggest claim to fame was that it was Howard Hughes' favorite movie! Apparently he saw it over 90 times, which is amazing to me. He must have liked submarines!

John Sturges was just super. Originally, they had David Niven and Gregory Peck. They built the submarine, and then something happened. They both got paid, by the way. Then Rock was in it, and it was John's idea to use me. By the time the movie went into production, I think it was \$4 million above the cutoff line. It was an expensive movie. The submarine had been built; the interior, the one we used on the set, actually submerged. It would have been a very good movie with Gregory Peck and David Niven.

The outcome of this hiatus was a decision to move to the United States: first to Santa Fe, New Mexico, and then to Pacific Palisades, California, where he lives today.

The *Moonshine War* (1970) was a film that critics once again found difficult to categorize. His role as a Southern federal prohibition agent named Frank Long was either praised highly as unique casting, or questioned as miscasting. In either case, it was a far different role from what the critics and public alike were used to seeing.

Question: How did you get into that? It was a very different role.

It's very strange. The guy who produced "*Ice Station Zebra*," Marty Ransohoff, also produced "*Moonshine War*." I came out to Hollywood on business and found out he was in the building, and I went in to say "Hello."

He was sitting down with the director, Richard Quine. I walk in, and the guy points to me and says "HEY!"

I say, "Hi, Marty. How are you?"

He says, "HEY! Want to be in '*The Moonshine War*'? I say, 'I don't know. What's '*The Moonshine War*'?' He says, "We're trying to cast the part."

Tell me what the part is." He does.

I say, "How can I play that?" "Kentucky? Louisville? Revenuer? It's kinda out of my beat." But I thought it would be a nice vacation for the family, in America, so I did it.

There was something interesting about it, but overall it lacked, shall we say, a definition of style. But it was an interesting little subject. I remember discussing it with Ransohoff when he came down (we shot most of it in Stockton and a little bit in the studio). I said, "Is this meant to be a comedy, a farce, or a satire? Nobody seems to know."

The following year, *Mary Queen of Scots* (1971) was released, with McGoohan in the role of James Stuart. For much of 1972-73 he was once again behind the camera on a directing assignment. As the Director for the film version of *Catch My Soul*, it was his job to bring to life the rock musical with an Othello theme.

That was a bizarre situation. I happened to be living in Santa Fe, New Mexico at the time, and this other guy happened to be living there too. He was the original director, called me eight days before they were scheduled to shoot. He panicked, couldn't do it. I did it; I shouldn't have done it. There wasn't enough time to prepare.

By this time directing and writing had become near-equal interests with acting. Several projects kept him behind the camera instead of in front of it for long periods of time.

He once again combined his acting, directing, and writing talents over a three-year period on the *Columbo* television series starring Peter Falk. In 1974, he appeared in *By Dawn's Early Light* as a military colonel who resorts to murder to support military honor and misguided ideals in his position as head of a military academy. His performance won him an Emmy for "Outstanding Single Performance by a Supporting Actor in a Comedy or Drama Series" presented at the Emmy Awards program broadcast May 19, 1975. The following year he directed and appeared in *Identity Crisis* as a brash, flippant advertising executive leading a life as a secret agent with a penchant for side deals. He once again took a director's job in a 1976 *Columbo* episode called *Last Salute To The Commodore* starring Peter Falk and Robert Vaughn.

I first met Peter Falk on the plane going down to North Carolina to film "*Dawn*"; we accidentally took the same flight. We hit it off right from the start and liked each other. We talked about the script, and I ended up rewriting



Patrick McGoohan with wife Joan (1983). Courtesy: "New Zealand Woman's Weekly."

much of that one, and later did the same for "*Identity Crisis*." Peter had pretty good control over his show, much like I had when I was doing mine, a good bit of leeway about what he could do.

In "*Dawn*," the guy wasn't a villain. He committed a murder, yes, but he did it as a matter of false ideals. His whole concept of loyalty. The scene at the end, on the parade grounds between him and *Columbo* said it all. He was going to book him for murder, no doubt about that, but there was no arrest scene. Instead, the cut came just as the two of them turned to look at each other; you knew that *Columbo* understood.

A little thing in there ... I wanted to write this and see if he would let me get away with it. So, I wrote this thing when they were sitting in the office and *Columbo* was questioning the Colonel and the Colonel said, "Everyone has a uniform, even you. I suppose you could call that coat a uniform ..." He puts him on the spot. Because that coat was *Columbo's* uniform, Peter's uniform, in a way he was attacking *Columbo's* uniform. Peter didn't really want to do it. I said, "Let's shoot it and then you can decide; you can cut it out if you don't want it and not miss it. But, he kept it in."

Another work during this period included *The Genius* (1975), an Italian western in which he played a rough and sadistic military officer.

I'd never worked on an Italian film before. It was chaotic and very badly organized.

We were in Rome and they had to go on location to one part of Spain and then come back to Italy and go to another location. I wasn't involved in this piece and didn't have to go. So, I said to the production officer, "Where do you want me to be?" He said, "You had better stay around because we might get finished early." I said, "Where should I stay? In Rome?" He said, "No, stay in Spain somewhere." I said, "Where ... in Madrid?" He said, "No, stay in Granada. It's near to where we'll be." I said, "Well, where will you be?" He said, "We're not sure yet." I said, "You're going on location in two days! And you don't know where? Here's a piece of paper. You write down some telephone number where I can contact you, some number. Is there going to be a production office here?" He said, "Yes, it will still be here."

He gave me two numbers. And I called up a hotel I knew in Granada and booked in there for a week, with the possible extension for another week. And I gave the production company the address and telephone of the place where I was staying and said THAT'S where I'll be. I won't move until I hear from you. You will call me, won't you?

After about 3 or 4 days I called the production office in Rome to see how they were getting on. There is no production office. I don't



know how many calls I made ... no one knew. "We've never heard of them." "There was somebody like that here at one time, but they've gone now." No one had the names of the people on the crew list and none of those people were there. No accounting office there? I'd been in it! Everything is gone. "We don't know anything about them ... stop bothering us."

So, I called another number. "Never heard of them." I was stranded in Granada with no film company. Then, in the middle of the third week, I suddenly got a call. They had decided to go back to Rome.

It was chaotic. They don't shoot live sound. There was one scene I had to do in a whisper and you had 60 technicians all gathered around shouting as we were doing it. They get just enough sound to know what was being said.

And I had to ride a horse in it. The poor animal; it must have been mistreated for life because it wanted to kill anyone who got on its back. That was tough, I just couldn't control this poor thing.

And when it was finished, I got a call about five months later saying, "Can you come over to London tomorrow to do your post-synching?" In other words, to put my voice to these lines that were never properly recorded in the first place. I said, "I can't." One day's notice? I was doing something else and couldn't leave. They said, "That's all right, don't worry." That was the last I heard from them.

Some friend of mine saw it somewhere; in France, I believe, the English version of it in France. He said, "Have you heard how you talk these days?" I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "They got someone to do your voice ... sort of a lisping jerk." They got someone in London to do the work. They didn't care!

It was a nightmare! I'll never ever do a movie in Italy again ... unless I can take over an American or British film crew. Madness! Madness!

A television film, *The Man In The Iron Mask*, was made in England in 1976 (and shown in 1979). He played the devious power behind the throne and the imprisonment of the identical brother of the corrupt imposter king. And, of special note, the ever popular feature film *Silver Streak* (1976) got rave reviews. In a classic villain role as Roger Devereau, McGooohan's shoot-out with the cops on the train was the high point of the film.

It was a straight forward efficient job of work. Director Arthur Hiller knows his stuff; he was well prepared, he brought the thing in



McGooohan in Rafferty tv series (1977).

on budget and on schedule. Good chemistry between actors; a good yarn, a very good yarn. We did location work in Canada because they wouldn't let us use ANY U.S. railroad tracks. Some film company did a movie, and there was an accident where someone got killed. And because of that, they wouldn't let us use ANY U.S. tracks, so we had to go to Canada (Calgary) for all that location setting. The rest was done in the studio.

Question: How long did it take to film the shoot-out on the train?

That was complicated stuff. I think it took about 3 weeks. We had to watch what we were doing because we were on a "used" track, we weren't on just a little side line. We were allowed just so many runs up and down the track at certain times of the day. If something came, we had to get out of the way. But from the point of view that the train was coming and taking my head off? That was all trick stuff, of course. And the train wreck was all done with little models. Model shots.

Now, of course, they show how things are done all of the time. Which I think is a pity. Not that it's such a terrible secret. For instance, I took my children to the pantomime in London

when they were small to see *Babes In The Woods*. And they're three or four years old and seeing fairies ... the wonderment of flying and all that. It's all real and wonderful and magic to them. The one thing that one is not going to do, I hope, is take them backstage and say "This roof is just a painted piece of plywood here and the wires are here to make them fly." One doesn't do that. One leaves the fantasy alone. I like to think the same way of the magic that's done on film. Just a personal point of view.

1977 brought the short-lived television series *Rafferty*. Debuting to mixed reviews (and up against NFL Monday night football and network movies), McGooohan's acting job brought uniformly good reviews. The role as Doctor Sid Rafferty was unique in that it offered McGooohan a chance for developing a characterization with some warmth, charm, and a little humor along with the drama and tension. His earlier stage and BBC-TV work had included comedy and he was good at it, but this type of role has been rare in recent years. *Rafferty* survived for thirteen episodes and was improving in the ratings when it was cancelled.

"*Rafferty*" wasn't a particularly pleasant experience. It was straight back into the conveyor-belt system of television. I said, "Look, I'll do this thing but I don't want to be just another doctor in another hospital." They had already written the character as a bit of a rebel, a good doctor who hated all of the baloney and political red tape that one has to go through to get people healed. My job was to heal people; that's it. I'm a doctor. And I wanted him to be a roving doctor. Get out of the hospital. He would use hospitals if he had to, when he couldn't "fix" them by himself.

I had two friends; one of them had lived on an Indian reservation for years. I got them to research various cures that were done ... extraordinary things ... like a cornea transplant with a fish hook. The doctor did that one himself. They came up with forty incidents; each one of them could have been made into a story. We were into the third episode and I took this to them and said, "Why don't we pay them a fee for the rights to these stories and then get our writers to develop them?" One time *Rafferty* can be on an Indian reservation; another time he can be on a boating trip. Whatever it is. He is, in fact, a roving doctor. I'd like to have had a little van and go around and fix things that other people can't fix.

The only episode that was close to this concept was one that I directed myself (*The Wild Child*). *Rafferty* was on a bus somewhere; there was only about a minute in the hospital. The only one that was near to what I was after.

It just didn't work out. Coming from what I'd done, my own thing. I was dealing with five or six executives all of the time. Decisions ... it was very hard to get a yes or no. A miserable time. I wouldn't do that again.

*Kings and Desperate Men* was also made in 1977 but was only seen a couple of times at film festivals before its release in England last year (1985). Made in Canada with Alex Kanner for Kanner's film company. Reviewers have criticized a number of technical parts of the film while at the same time praising the acting. Chief among the complaints are the use of sound in such a way as to make it difficult to understand the actors, and the frequent cutting away from scenes. It has yet to be released in the United States. Followers of *The Prisoner* will recognize Kanner as an actor who appeared in three of the episodes of that series. A London review: "In the film, McGooohan has found a role which is just as original as Number Six. He plays the eccentric host of a Canadian radio talk show who is held hostage by a terrorist group and forced to hold a trial by radio. The performance is riveting, extraordinary in its sheer power." (Master, Anthony. "Back at Centre Stage"; *Telegraph Sunday Magazine* London, March 24, 1985, pp. 20-25.) Film critic Charles Champlin of the *Los Angeles Times* (4/28/83) called his performance "mesmerizing."

That was an interesting role. The premise, the story is a good story ... the takeover of the

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radio station by terrorists to get a public verdict on a man they thought had been unfairly condemned. And the twisted idealogy. A very, very good premise, particularly in these days.

Again, I did it because the character appealed to me. This fellow, who's a bit of a no-good, suddenly finds some fibre of character within himself. And that is the conflict, as to who in the end has more strength and will.

1978 brought the film *Brass Target* with a special television interview, *The Troyer Interview*. In *Escape From Alcatraz* (1979), McGooohan played the warden to Clint Eastwood's convict in a drama that was remembered for good acting. *The Hard Way* (1980) was made in Ireland for British and Irish television and recently became available in the United States on video tape. In a role as both the perpetrator of violence and the victim of violence, the film is a two-hander between McGooohan and Lee VanCleave as two middle-aged international assassins, with McGooohan trying to quit the business in order to return to his wife and family.

I liked the idea of the script initially. Again, because it was a man, an isolated sort of man, trying to break away from his past, which is difficult to do. And, in fact, he couldn't do it; he tried, and it didn't work. It has to be a "small" film by the nature of it. And in the end, he couldn't kill the other guy and come out smelling like a rose. It just wouldn't work. It's the same story as some of the westerns with the guy who's been a gunfighter for a while and becomes the sheriff and makes it work. And by doing good deeds he's forgiven his past and rides off into the sunset. They couldn't do that in this film.

*Scanners* (1981) was a science-fiction/horror film made in Canada and shown to popular release in the United States. In the role of Dr. Paul Ruth, he was responsible for the creation of the scanners, some of whom had become a threat to society through the misuse of their special powers.

It was a similar situation to "Moonshine War." I went up to Montreal to meet with some producers about a script I had written and



McGooohan in *Pack of Lies*.

wanted them to do and they said, "While you're up here would you like to do this?" And they showed me a script. And I made some comments on the script and they did some quick re-writing on it. Anyway, I did it. It took about two and a half weeks. That was the movie that "made" David Cronenberg. He's since gone on to other things; he's a big director now. He knows his stuff. It made a lot of money for a small-budget film. They make commercials for more than that one cost.

*Six of One: The Prisoner File* (shown on British television in 1984) was largely put together in 1982. A documentary about the making of *The Prisoner* series, it contained interviews with a number of participants in the series, including McGooohan.

A film so far unreleased was made in New Zealand in 1983 and titled *Trespases*. (Finding Katie was the first working title.) He played the role of Fred Wells, a father in search of a daughter who has left home to join a commune.

Producer Tom Finlayson indicates that his company would like to release the film in the U.S. sometime soon.

The film deals with concepts common to many other films made in the country; life in isolated rural communities, expansive landscapes, the effects of solitude on the mind, and takes a strong introspective look at complex characters. *Variety* (9-21-83) reviewed the film favorably and said of McGooohan's work: "Patrick McGooohan's Wells is a tightly controlled performance which is perhaps the finest of his career."

It was made for a small film company. Again, I liked the role; I play a very different character from ANYTHING I've played on the screen. He was a widowed fellow, a very strict religious type, who had a young daughter who was now eighteen. He brought her up in a very strict fashion, and she runs off with this group; sort of flower children, belated hippies. It's his tortured effort to get her back and her tortured effort to try to make him understand that she's not a bad girl. But that she's been confined for so long by his strict attitude and his embittered life after his wife died. That she's been sort of a mother to him.

And it's this conflict between the two of them. The working title we had was "Finding Katie," which is her name. But, really, they are both trying to find themselves. It's a serious piece. It ends in sort of a remorse.

1985-1986. A Renaissance Period And A Return To The Stage.

1985 brought the release of *Jamaica Inn* (made in 1982), in which he played Joss Merlyn, the drunken and violent landlord of the Jamaica Inn. Shown in syndication throughout the United States, it's one of the few projects he has made recently for television. One critic called it a "spell-

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binding performance worthy of an Emmy."

The producer of that, Peter Graham Scott, had worked for me on "Secret Agent" and "The Prisoner," and he wanted me to do that. And I hadn't been back to England for a while. So, I did it. And I thought it was a fun sort of part; a real downright melodramatic villain.

In the feature film *Baby ... Secret of the Lost Legend* he played a ruthless paleontologist who would stop at nothing to take credit for the discovery of dinosaurs in the African jungle. A guest part as a chief magistrate in the PBS *Three Sovereigns for Sarah* was done as a favor to the director:

The reason that came up was that James Mason was going to do it, but he died just before it started. And the director, who is a man I'd worked with before in England, called literally 36 hours before they were going to shoot. They were really stuck, and he knew I'd worked with Vanessa before, and he said, "Help us out, please." I didn't even see a script, just said, "Tell me what it is." So I said, "Sure, if it will only take a few days." And so I did it.

A successful Broadway play *Pack of Lies* completed his activity for 1985.

Why a play, at that time? The decision was made in part by what he says are personal feelings for the need for a "new beginning."

*Pack of Lies* marked McGooohan's return to the stage for the first time in nearly 25 years and was his first Broadway performance. A notable success, the New York Post (2-12-85) review announced "Pack of Lies revives Broadway" and The Christian Science Monitor (2-19-85) headlined "Tale of Suspense Gives Broadway Season Needed Lift." The Philadelphia Inquirer (2-19-85) said: "McGooohan, charming and bitterly cool, steers Bob and Barbara Jackson down a road of duplicity and deceit, all in the name of God and Queen and Country. It is a smart, powerful, superbly paced performance. In a role perfectly suited to the gray-haired actor who spent much of the 60s sparring with spies in *Secret Agent*.



McGooohan with Rock Hudson in *Ice Station Zebra* (1968).

I was looking around for a play to do, and this one just came out of the blue. I'd made a time slot to do something in the theatre. And the 25 year thing ... to get up on the stage again. It's a funny feeling.

Question: Were you nervous?

Petrified! Absolutely petrified! Of course.

Because after 25 years ... it's a long time. You saw the film *My Favorite Year*? Well, that's pretty much what it was. We opened in Boston, and that first night was something else! But then, one gets through it. And then you get the feeling again ...

But I wouldn't do another one that long. I think we got five months out of it which is not bad for a drama like that. Shows were coming on and off in four nights while we were still on, so we would have to consider it a decent run for a play of that sort. If I do any more theatre, I'd do regional theatre. Three or four weeks, something like that.

How do you relate to the audience? Can you see them?

From the stage? I would hate to go look at a person, or a group. But one is conscious of them, very much so. From peripheral vision ... you know there are a bunch of empty seats up

there without having to look at them. And one can sense on the stage what sort of an audience it's going to be.

All audiences are different. There's no such thing as two identical audiences. ALL are different as each performance is different. And the audience is the other percentage of the performance. The performance of any play varies according to the rhythms that are coming back from an audience, and vice versa. On any given night, you can have a warm audience apart from one antagonistic area over there somewhere (pointing to his left). It may be only two people, it might be one person. You can feel them. You try to win back that little antagonistic group over to your side. It's a fascinating experience to turn them around. One plays with them, as if one's playing with a partner you are actually saying the dialog to ... and there is someone else in the dialog who is the audience that evening.

But looking out? No. I never would. Never. Not even when taking a bow. Personally, I wouldn't. Others may do it, I don't.

I try to keep that imaginary wall. They can see in, but theoretically I can't see out. In this thing, I had a soliloquy. One picks one or two spots ... perhaps the front of the mezzanine, a little light up there or an exit sign ... and one uses that as an eye line.

Question: Singers look out at the audience and work to change the mood of that audience.

It's the same. One can win an audience over. You can have an audience that for some reason that no one can explain ... on a perfect day, a perfect mid-summer day ... and you have a full house of an audience who are giving out WAVES of antagonism. Before the curtain goes up! They haven't SEEN anything yet. You can feel it the way they settle down as the lights start to dim. You can get a feeling then: "I know it's going to be a tough one."

And the thing is there are various ways of approaching it, depending on what the play is. The worst thing one can do, I think, if there is

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that feeling of ice out there, is to try and break it by being too hard, too brittle ... too antagonistic. They have to be coaxed. So, therefore, one might play a scene in a slightly different way, wooing them into it. And then one can turn that. It can happen that that ice gradually melts.

That often happens. And, oddly enough, that makes for a better performance ... because people are aware of that. They pay more attention, there is more intense concentration.

When the critics are in, which they all know nowadays (they didn't used to know when the critics were coming, but now they usually know), because plays are reviewed on the first night, everyone says, "I gave my best performance." But, actually, what happens is that everyone knows the critics are in and it heightens the performance. It does actually heighten the whole thing and makes for a better performance. It's nervous energy, the adrenaline.

In 1986, he completed a tv film called *Of Pure Blood*, shown on CBS-TV October 19.

#### Epilogue

The most often used word to describe Patrick McGooohan throughout the years is 'enigmatic' ... a word defined in the dictionary to mean puzzling, mysterious, inexplicable, ambiguous. The perfect word.

Warmth, humor, and kindness gleam through, as does a volatile temper, stubbornness, and impatience. But what shows most strongly is the intense desire for privacy and his strength to follow his own individuality. Compatible goals. A brilliant mind that wants to put forth ideas and raise questions. But doesn't want to talk to interviewers long enough to say how the ideas formed or provide his answers to the questions raised. Opinionated and reclusive. Enigmatic.

There is little in print that adequately conveys the private personality or thinking of Patrick McGooohan. Occasionally, an interview will contain enough depth to provide an insight into what the man thinks. But it never goes deeper. You al-

most never learn how he arrived at his thoughts and beliefs. One wishes for more, to find out the experiences, emotions, and thoughts that went into the development of those beliefs. Who influenced his outlook on life and career? His moral values? His determination for individuality? How does he see himself? Whose opinion does he respect ... and why?

#### His Right To Privacy And Individuality

Individuality was what "The Prisoner" was all about ... the right of the individual to lead his own life, a private life.

The First Amendment, I passionately believe in it! We have to have a free press to be free, we HAVE to have it. But we also have the right to a private life, to not have our lives invaded. When I think about people making a film about a living person, my rage knows no bounds! It's such a total injustice, a total invasion of everybody's concept of what the Bill of Rights and Constitution of the United States is all about! A terrible invasion. I feel such rage that I can barely talk about it. I can't understand it.

#### Breaking The Mold

Is he, as some people have suggested, typecast in the roles he plays? Possibly. But in which mold? Consider the background of the viewer and whether he/she has watched McGooohan predominately on television or the screen ... and how much or how little. He is almost always the hero on television and frequently the villain in films. The early plays seem to have offered a more balanced range of roles. Consider the content of the role, rather than the setting. Sometimes it is too simplistic an answer to place each role in a category. Consider the variety of roles across the span of his career, and the fact that he has worked all over the globe makes it difficult for a single person to have seen all of his work, regardless of effort. The incongruity is striking that an actor known for his individuality has the problem of being stuck in a mold, and critics can't even agree on which one.

Hero? Spy? Villain? An enigmatic question with

no simple answer.

There were two things I really shouldn't have done. I should never have done the contract with the Rank Organization because of the films I did there. I played the villain in "Hell Drivers" and then I got a reputation as a villain. Because I did a good job at it! I left Rank Organization with mutual understanding. I wasn't too happy with them, and they weren't too happy with me, I don't think. And, of course, I did the tv series. I hate to say I shouldn't have done them because by doing the tv series, I was able to do "The Prisoner." I could never have done that without my association with Lou Grade. So, who is to say what's right and what's wrong. Except when one does a tv series, it's hard to break out of that mold.

When one does a successful series that is really popular, that is the image that stays. To break out of that, what one can do ... three or four good movies. Even then, unless you have a super smash, there's no way to counteract that. You would have to do a bunch of them to offset that. And then there will still be people who say: "Gee, I wish he would do another series of "Secret Agent." I meet them, here in the street ... today, I meet them. Cab drivers. "What was that junk you did, "The Prisoner?" (Laughing) And then there are people who say nice things about "The Prisoner" ... stop me on the street. It works all ways. One has to take it with a pinch of salt.

"Secret Agent" and "The Prisoner" were really two completely different things. The only way to beat it would be to do another series which is so different from those two, that then they (the viewing audience) would think of THAT series ... That's the only way you are going to offset it.

That was the problem with "Rafferty" as far as the public was concerned. If it had been REALLY good and started out with a complete twist to it, it might have worked. It started off

(Continued on page 40)



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#### patrick mcgoohan (Cont'd. from page C7)

quite high in the ratings for the first four or five and then ... You talk about shuffling of network schedules ... It did quite well at first, despite what I thought of it, and then the other guys (the networks) put in their big movies against me and it didn't have a chance.

Carroll O'Connor is a fine actor. No matter what he does, he's enormously successful. But that's not the point. He's still an actor hungering for interesting parts. But to some people he will always be "Archie Bunker." And as it is with me still to a certain degree, the "Secret Agent" thing and "The Prisoner" thing.

Question: How do you want people to see you? I'm not really concerned. To say you want people to see you in a certain way, I don't really know what that means. So, what do I want people to think of me? I don't care; all I want to do is some decent work. It's their business what they think. I don't want them to think anything, why should I? I want my family to like me a little bit ... that's another matter! For one reason or another, I don't want them to hate me! But with regard to what I want, I don't know. Otherwise, I'd have a publicity agent designing "my image," which I don't. I

(Continued on page 57)

#### patrick mcgoohan (Continued from page 40)

don't want it. I really don't care.

Question: What roles would you like to have?

Good roles. What's a good role? Othello is a good role, so is Iago. They're very different roles. Hamlet is a good part. No particular one. When one has played a range of stuff, one can play a lot of things. I like comedy very much. A lot of the early plays were that.

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cover by larry byrd



johnny hines



## in conversation with patrick mcgoohan — 3

by barbara pruet

### About Romantic Roles

Patrick McGoohan is a man with a sense of classical romanticism in the way he looks at the sort of role he would be willing to play. What of his apparent decision to limit romantic roles in this way? What are the consequences of such a decision on an acting career? Certainly, this narrows the range of roles and affects one's image and publicity. An interesting example of McGoohan's problem in this category was discussed in a 1966 article about *Danger Man*: "There was mild panic at first (among the tv executives, at his refusal of on-screen romance) when it became obvious McGoohan had taken command of the ship and was steering in uncharted television waters. An American representative hurried over to England, where the series was made, to plead for more sex and sadism and at least some publicity photos of the star entwined with glamorous girls. McGoohan told him there must be a market for a hero who is decent, and to go find it." (Musel, Robert. "The Incorruptible Patrick McGoohan": *TV Guide*, May 14, 1966, pp. 10-12.)

If you give me a romantic role, I'll play it. But romantic roles have nothing to do with taking your clothes off and playing around in bed. That has nothing to do with romance! Nothing whatsoever! That has nothing to do with love. You want to know a great romance? "It Happened One Night." You know what happened? They never went to bed. They never kissed. It was more romantic, more sexy. That's the real sex of love and romance. They never took their clothes off.

People read a script and look for those things. I can write three pages at the beginning of a script and guarantee I'm going to sell it. Guaranteed. I can write it if I want to ... but I don't. I'm against it. Passionately.

One mustn't show ALL. You don't show ALL of any individual. One mustn't show ALL of any art. Otherwise you get a camera and show a canvas and the paint brushes and the palette knife setting out. You must provide a point of view, appeal to an aura of mystery somewhere. But not all.

Yes, romance! Please, more! We want more romance on film, by all means! I love romance. My wife and I have one of the most romantic marriages. We're more in love today than we were when we were married. We're very romantic sort of people ... I think. I'm lucky. "DO I KNOW IT!" Extremely lucky.

What other actor has created and sustained a successful career without playing romantic leads or marketing himself as a "star" or personality? It's a remarkable accomplishment under the circumstances.



McGoohan in *All Night Long* (1961).

### On Learning Your Craft ...

Question: When did you get to the point of feeling successful?

Well, you know, you never get it. When I talk about Brand like that, it sounds like I'm saying "Now I've done Brand, I've got it. It's not that at all. It's just that at the time, for that particular part, I was ready for it. It just happened to be at the right time. When do you think you learn your craft? You've never "got it." It's what I said about my writing, you go on honing it. I think what's more dangerous than anything is to let it slide. That's what you have to watch.

When one is going through that many plays, like I did at Sheffield, that's the healthiest form of acting. I'm quite sure about this; perfect for me anyway. Do one play and immediately start rehearsing another one. So that one feeds the other. The one you are rehearsing during the day stimulates the acting juices and carries over to one's performance in the evening. They add to each other.

And together there was no time to sit down and think "Now what about my career? How are my acting skills? When am I going to get out into the big wide world and be a success?" Never thought about such things.

Question: A lot of the roles you play are heavy drama.

Well, not by my choice.

Question: If you consider yourself basically shy, how can you play so many roles that call for "being on the edge?"

Because one is playing them, not living them. In playing them, one can play anything.

Question: Do you ever read your reviews?

Sometimes, yes, for the play, of course. I read all of the reviews. I cut the two worst ones out and underlined them in red and pasted them on my mirror!

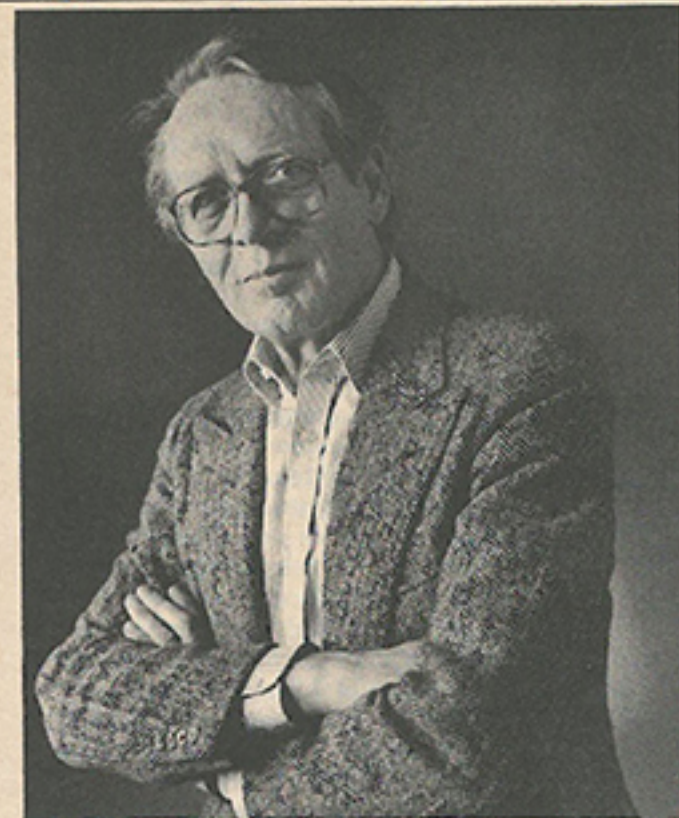
I've always done that in the theatre. I do it to remind one. They were real bad. I used to do that in the theatre in repertory. I remember one about "Born Yesterday." Everybody liked it except this one critic. I was very young, but I was playing the older part in it. I've done "Born Yesterday" four times, but this was the first time. I was playing Harry Brock, which is a real "Broderick Crawford" type of part: a tough sort of brawny crook. I was skinny as a rail, and I had to put padding on and a false accent and all that. This ONE guy wrote, "I don't know what profession Mr. McGoohan should be in ... whether it's plumbing or construction or banking. But, it definitely shouldn't be acting." I can't quite remember the exact words. But I know I cut that out and put it up on my mirror! That's a good thing to remember. Why? Because it makes you think! Wait a minute, he didn't say that for no reason! Just spontaneous hate, or what? He had a reason. What was the reason? It's a good thing to be reminded of, the fallibility of us, of it all. I mean, no point in pasting up your good notices, is there? No point in doing that.

On Directing ...

Question: As an actor, what do you look for in a director? And conversely, as a director, what do you look for in an actor?

As a director, I think the first thing one needs is a script. Get the script as "right" as you can get it. All directors do this, any decent director will tell you that. Get your blueprint to work.

Then you cast it. That's the second most important thing. If you cast it correctly, most of your work is done. With regard to the actor, if he's ideally cast, then you just leave him alone as much as possible. That's the greatest thing you can do ... but let him know you have faith in him. All actors need reassurance. Just to have you say "That's terrific" and then move on to the next bit. He needs to know that, and to know that you mean it. Apart from asking him where to go with the scene. You can say "Maybe he comes in here and maybe he goes to the bed first, and he takes off his coat ... does he hang it up in the closet?" To the actor: "How do you feel? Maybe he doesn't take off his coat if he doesn't want to. Make him comfortable and watch to see that he's happy. Then



Patrick McGoohan from 1985 photo session with Jeanne Strongen.

everything falls into place.

To say to someone: "You come here and stand here" ... "Put a mark down please, he's going to stand there." That drives me crazy. From the other side, you see, as an actor ... when a director does that. There was a director in quite a well known movie, and I had a scene ... about a five page scene ... and it was my biggest scene in the piece. I was early. I love to get ready early and then I can look at my script. I hate to rush and I can't bear to be late. I was in my dressing room ... nothing was happening. I was in the first shot, I knew that. I went out to the first assistant and said: "When do you want to rehearse?" And he said: "All right, just take it easy. We'll call you when we're ready." So I went back to the dressing room. I knew my stuff, and I didn't want to look at it anymore; you don't want to look at it too much or you'll lose the freshness.

About 45 minutes later, he says: "O.K., we're ready." I go out to the set; it was the first time I'd SEEN the set. I said to the director: "Alright, what do you want me to do?" He said: "Your first move is over to there." There's a mark on the floor; it says "P 1" for Patrick-1. "Your next move is there." There were eleven moves in the scene, and they were all mine. And I said to the director, "Aren't we going to rehearse?" He says: "No, no; we rehearsed with your stand-in." I said: "Well, is HE going to play it? He likes those marks, does he?"

The director says: "Oh, they'll work out; you'll see when you start acting them." And I started acting it and, of course, they didn't work out. But I wasn't going to argue about it. It was an exercise ... "I'll make it fit, I'll make it fit those marks." It's a very uncomfortable feeling.

So, therefore, the directors who give one confidence ... all actors, I don't care who they are, even the biggest actors ... need reassurance. That the director thinks you're the guy he wants for this, that you can do it better than anyone else. As an actor, you want that feel. And also the feeling that you know what you're doing. That he trusts you; see, he leaves you alone.

And yet, the scene that appears to be going fine from a director's point of view ... Even if you cast it perfectly and the scene played well, maybe in the framework of the whole picture that you see edited in your mind, you know that it should go a little faster. Even though it played well at that particular moment. You know that in the editing you would like it all to go a little faster to fit in with the rhythm of what's gone before and what's coming up. So you can suggest: "That's terrific, but if we can just pick it up a little bit." "Just try it once to see how that feels." Just tighten it up a little bit, just suggest it.



Question: How much of an obligation does a director or film company have to keep a part close to the way you signed to do it?

They've got all of the "rights" on their side. That fine print gives them the right to do just about anything they want. In fact, you can be fired if you say: "I don't want to do it the way the director says." They say: "He's the guy we hired to direct this picture, and that's the way we want it. Do it that way or not." But it rarely ever comes to that. It certainly never came to that with me. I'd never have thought of such a thing. I mean, there are a lot of ways to do it.

Another thing that happens quite often is that, as you read a script, you see the part and you know the way it's written, the way it's intended to be played (and you know that you can play it like that) ... then you get into doing it and the director has a completely different concept. Nothing to do with what was written. It's the same words, but he's got some weird idea in his mind what this character should look like, how he should be, his background. And suddenly he throws that at you the first day. And that's a little unsettling.

The directors who do that, they've got to change everything into their image or what they think the world is about. You can't do anything about it. You just go on and try to meet his requirements if he can't be persuaded out of that by your saying: "Look, that's not the way I thought it was written! Why did you hire ME?" "I thought it was written like that, and because it was written like that, you hired me." This doesn't happen all of the time; but, surprisingly it does happen.

On Enjoying The Performance Of Others ...

Question: Who do you like to see act?

There are a lot of them, of course. To see anyone who is good in a part that suits him. The list is enormous. One hates to mention favorites; I don't have a favorite. To see Dustin Hoffman do a double work, for instance, is a pleasure. "Tootsie" is a work of art. He deserved an Oscar for that. It would be nice if they had two categories of Oscars; for drama



McGoohan: The Quare Fellow (1962).

and for comedy. A marvelous piece of work. But then, "The Graduate" was a marvelous piece of work too.

It's such a pleasure to see someone, an artist, do work like that. Robert De Niro has done some good stuff. And Jack Nicholson. All the character actors and actresses. Just seeing someone in an ordinary piece of work, from the point of view of the script and the director and the lighting ... when one can forget the technique in all those areas, it's good.

A film I enjoyed enormously which wasn't as much concerned with acting as with a theme was "Back To The Future."

Question: Are you a "fan" of someone?

"E.T.!" Let's say that. All right, how about that? That'll do it. Very good acting that little guy did! The best acting I've seen for many, many years. None of the other participants had a chance! All the best that can be done with cameras. And next to that, I'd say the camera has got to be my favorite actor when it does well. The camera is so often the best actor. But, I want to see "E.T." again.

Question: Do you have any autographs?

No. It's a terrible imposition. Personally, I wouldn't go up to Arturo Toscanini and say,

"Sure enjoyed the way you conducted last night! Here, will you sign this piece of paper for me, please?" But I would go home thinking I'd seen a genius at work.

Question: Which of your own films do you like the best?

I can't really say.

Why not?

Because I don't think of them that way. I really don't know.

The thing I've done on camera ... let's put it that way, forget tv or movies ... the thing that I've done on camera that I like most OVER HERE (in the United States) was "By Dawn's Early Light." That's my favorite piece.

On Writing ...

I've been writing as long as I can remember. I didn't do it for money. For my interest, always. I find great pleasure in writing, writing words on paper in various forms. Each person progresses differently. I'm a compulsive reader. And I'm inspired to write.

Question: When you were writing the scripts for The Prisoner, 20 years ago, people never analyzed women's roles too much. And yet, from my point of view now, women's roles in The Prisoner were pretty good ... just as strong as the men's roles in large part. And a couple of the "Number 2" slots were filled with women. Was there any particular thinking behind writing women's roles?

Well, I was brought up with four sisters, and I have three daughters, and two of my grandchildren are little girls.

Question: The roles in The Prisoner weren't stereotypes.

No, no. Of course not. I've never understood all the fuss ... I can never understand the men who have fought women in this particular way. I've never understood a "subservient" or different level. I've never understood that ... the way I've been brought up, it's natural that I'm not going to treat them in a different way. It's so stupid and shortsighted!

The roles in "The Prisoner" ... I never thought of it as such, do you know that? You're the first person who's mentioned that. I never

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said, "Hey, wait a minute, this is not an all male show!" It never occurred to me until you mentioned it. It comes as a surprise.

Patrick McGooohan is also a writer of poetry, thousands of poems. He describes them all as sort of obscure and personal, too private to publish. But when he gets enough, he binds them and gives them to family and close friends.

Question: When and how did you get interested in writing poetry?

Always, really. Always. It wasn't a deliberate sort of thing. "I think I should write a piece of poetry." I never thought of it that way. I just sat down one day and wrote down a line or something ... then another line ... then another line. The third line rhymed with the first one and the fourth line rhymed with the second one. So it was a stanza. They're rhythmic. I don't know what category you would put them in.

What do I write about? I don't know. People, emotions, coffee on a tray. A thank-you note to friends for a very pleasant dinner can turn into a little poem. I did it that way instead of just saying "Thanks very much for a lovely evening." It was fun to do. I do it mainly for fun. I've written a couple when I've been enraged about something, mainly to get things out of my system. But, generally, they're about happy things.

He is a man whose career ranges over the world, in every medium and form. And a man whose marriage and family take priority that career. One who stolidly insists on a private life; yet the most consistent thread throughout 35 years of interviews is his affection for his wife and the importance of his family.

In a USA Today (2-7-85) interview about filming *Baby in Africa*, he recalls that living conditions were miserable, and the filming was slow: "During the shooting, I had a couple of days when I wouldn't be needed, so I flew home. Mind you, it's a 35-hour flight. Joan was waiting at the airport ... I remember saying 'Just give me a little kiss. A quick peck and I'll turn around and go back.' We had dinner, and I went back on the plane for another 35 hours. But it was worth it." A private ro-



McGooohan with Susan Hampshire in *Three Lives of Thomasina*.

mantic ... and a public actor who ruled out on-screen romantic parts. Enigmatic.

#### Reflections On The Conversation.

It's impossible to talk at length with Patrick McGooohan without coming away from the conversation impressed by the versatility and intellect of the man. He has a natural interest and curiosity about almost everything. The author of one article I'd read during the preparation of this piece said he thought Patrick McGooohan had a "searching mind," and I found this to be an apt description. He's a compulsive reader who tackles anything he might find worthwhile.

The usual interview questions about "best" or "most" or "worst" or "favorite" drew momentary silences. He doesn't think in those terms. He can't. He sees a wide range of good things in an even wider range of interests. He can't say who his "favorite" actor is or what he thinks is the "best" of anything because there are so many enjoyable actors and works around.

Talk to him long enough, and the "actor" part loses prominence and takes its place along side the writer, the director, the intellectual, the husband and father. By virtue of his background as an actor and writer, his voice and words punctuate his conversation. Expressive words and tones. The interview was a visual and verbal trip through the last forty years: excitement, anger,

frustration, humor, love, and satisfaction. If you could have heard our conversation (without knowing of the rapport) you might think that at times he was intimidating or enraged. He wasn't. His voice was.

He's a man who lives in the present and is constantly moving quickly into his future through the pursuit of any number of ideas or projects he has underway. And he puts a few more hours in his day than most of us do by only sleeping a couple of hours at night. When he says he's an early riser, he means 3:00 AM.

Now, at 58, Patrick McGooohan is an actor who has spent a lifetime playing roles of men in isolation, apart from the mainstream of society; loners who, for better or worse, rejected the rules and lived their own way. The public role, after all, may be the clearest insight to the enigma of the private person.

#### Acknowledgements

My thanks first of all to Patrick McGooohan for the gift of his time and commentary. And to the Librarians of the Library of Congress Motion Picture and Television Division for months of support, to the Librarians at the New York Public Library at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, and to Bruce Clark, American Rep of the Prisoner Appreciation Society. ITC and Patrick McGooohan couldn't have a better promoter of the series. If you care to share the PAS experience, write Bruce at P.O. Box 172, Hatfield, PA 19440.

**Patrick McGooohan: Films, TV, & Plays (1948-1986)**  
*The Brontës* (stage play); 1948. Playhouse, Sheffield.  
*The Brontës* (stage play); June, 1948. St. James, London.  
*Spring Model* (stage play); June, 1954. "Q," West End, London.  
*Time On Their Hands* (stage play); July, 1954.  
*The Vise* (tv series); 1954. Several episodes. One titled: "Gift From Heaven."  
*Gift From Heaven* (tv series episode from "The Vise"); 1954.  
*You Are There* (tv series); 1954. Episode title: *The Fall of Parnell*.  
*The Fall of Parnell* (tv series episode from *You Are There*); 1954.  
*Passage Home* (film); 1955. Film debut.  
*Serious Charge* (stage play); February, 1955. At the Garrick.

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*Moby Dick* (stage play); June, 1955. At the Duke of York's Theatre.  
*The Dam Busters* (film); 1955.  
*All My Sons* (play, BBC-TV); 1955.  
*I Am A Camera* (film); 1955.  
*The Dark Avenger* (film); 1955. Also titled: *The Warrior*.  
*The Warrior* (film); 1955. Also titled: *The Dark Avenger*.  
*Ring For Cathy* (stage play); February, 1956. At the Lyric.  
 Joan Drummond's name also appears in the cast credits.  
*Zarak* (film); 1956.  
*The Makepeace Story* (BBC-TV, 4-episode series); 1956.  
*Ruthless Destiny* (BBC-TV); 1956. One episode of *The Makepeace Story*.  
*High Tide At Noon* (film); 1957.  
*Disturbance* (play, BBC-TV); 1957.  
*Rendezvous* (TV, 3-episode series); 1957. Episode title: *The Hanging Of Alfred Wadham*.  
*The Hanging Of Alfred Wadham* (TV series, 1 episode); 1957. One episode of series *Rendezvous*.  
*The Little World* (play, BBC-TV); 1957.  
*The Third Miracle* (play, BBC-TV); 1957.  
*Hell Drivers* (film); 1957.  
*The Gypsy And The Gentleman* (film); 1958.  
*Elephant Gun* (film); 1958. Also titled: *Nor The Moon By Night*.  
*Nor The Moon By Night* (film); 1958. Also titled *Elephant Gun*.  
*Rest In Violence* (play, BBC-TV); 1958.  
*This Day In Fear* (play, BBC-TV); 1958.  
*Danton's Death* (stage play); January, 1959. Lyric, Hammersmith.  
*Brand* (stage play); April, 1959. Lyric, Hammersmith.  
*Brand* (play, BBC-TV); 1959.  
*The Big Knife* (play, BBC-TV); January, 1959.  
*The Greatest Man In The World* (play, BBC-TV); November, 1958.  
*The Iron Harp* (play, BBC-TV); 1959.  
*Terminus Number One* (play, BBC-TV); 1959.  
*Danger Man* (tv series, 39 episodes); 1961. 1960/1961.

39 episodes, 30 minutes each.  
*All Night Long* (film); 1961.  
*Dead Secret* (play, BBC-TV); 1961.  
*Two Living, One Dead* (film); 1961. Copyright renewed, 1983.  
*Life For Ruth* (film); 1962. Also titles: *Walk in the Shadow*.  
*Walk In The Shadow* (film); 1962. Original title: *Life For Ruth*.  
*The Quare Fellow* (film); 1962.  
*The Prisoner* (play, BBC-TV); 1962.  
*The Shadow of a Pale Horse* (play, BBC-TV); 1962.  
*The Three Lives of Thomasina* (film); 1962.  
*Dr. Syn, Alias the Scarecrow* (film); 1963.  
*Danger Man* (tv series, 45 episodes); 1965.  
 1964/1965/1966. 45 episodes, 60 minutes each. Also titled: *Secret Agent*.  
*Secret Agent* (tv series, 45 episodes); 1965. Also titled: *Danger Man*. 45 episodes, 60 minutes each.  
*Koroshi* (tv film); 1966. Color film, 2 episodes of *Secret Agent*.  
*The Prisoner* (tv series, 17 episodes); 1967. Made in 1966/1967. Shown in the United States in 1968 by CBS.  
*Journey Into Darkness* (tv series); 1968. Patrick McGooohan introduced, but did not appear in, two episodes: 1) The new people, and 2) paper dolls.  
*The New People* (tv series episode from *Journey Into Darkness*); 1968. McGooohan introduced the episode but did not appear in it.  
*Paper Dolls* (tv series episode from *Journey Into Darkness*); 1968. McGooohan introduced the episode but did not appear in it.  
*Ice Station Zebra* (film); 1968.  
*The Moonshine War* (film); 1970.  
*Mary, Queen of Scots* (film); 1971.  
*Catch My Soul* (film); 1973. Directed, but did not appear in the film.  
*Columbo* (tv series); 1974. McGooohan appeared in 2 episodes: *By Dawn's Early Light* (1974) and *Identity Crisis* (1975); directed *Identity Crisis* and one in which he did not

appear, *Last Salute to the Commodore* (1976). (Ed. note: additional credits possible, but not yet documented.)  
*By Dawn's Early Light* (tv series episode from *Columbo*); 1974. McGooohan won an Emmy in 1975 for "Best Supporting Actor" for his role in this episode.  
*Identity Crisis* (tv series episode from *Columbo*); 1975. Directed and appeared in this episode.  
*The Genius* (film); 1975. Also titled: *Un Genio, Due Compari e Un Pollo*.  
*Un Genio, Due Compari e un Pollo* (film); 1975. Also titled: *The Genius*.  
*Last Salute To The Commodore* (tv series episode from *Columbo*); 1976. Directed, did not appear in the film.  
*Silver Streak* (film); 1976.  
*Rafferty* (tv series, 13 episodes); 1977. Starred in all. Directed one episode: *The Wild Child*.  
*Brass Target* (film); 1978.  
*The Troyer Interview* (tv interview on Canadian television); 1978. Interview covered the making of *The Prisoner* series.  
*Escape From Alcatraz* (film); 1979.  
*The Man In The Iron Mask* (tv film); 1979. Made in 1976.  
*The Hard Way* (tv film); 1980.  
*Scanners* (film); 1981.  
*Kings and Desperate Men* (film). Made in Canada, 1977. Released in England, 1985.  
*Trespassers* (film); 1983. Unreleased at this time. Previous title: *Finding Katy*. Made in New Zealand.  
 Six into one; *The Prisoner* file (tv interview); 1984. Tv special consisting of interviews with a number of people who were involved in the making of *The Prisoner* series, including McGooohan.  
*Baby, Secret of the Lost Legend* (film); 1985.  
*Three Sovereigns for Sarah* (tv film); 1985. McGooohan had a guest role.  
*Jamaica Inn* (tv film); 1985. Made in 1982.  
*Pack of Lies* (stage play); 1985. Broadway play opened February 11, 1985. Tryout held in Boston.  
*Today Show* (tv interview); 1985. Interview held March 1, 1985.  
 National Public Radio (Radio interview); 1985. Radio tribute to Orson Welles at the time of his death (October 10) included an interview with McGooohan. Probable broadcast date October 11, 1985.  
*Of Pure Blood* (film); 1986. Working title of a just-completed film. (Ed. note: May, 1986).



Three scenes from McGooohan's 1983 *Trespasses*.

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was one of the few writers whose fiction could be easily and almost literally translated to the screen. Grey tried acting in Australia but was not very successful in that film. Cliff Howe

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