

Fansite Nim's Island Interview via phone with Gerard Butler - March 15, 2008

Thanks to Fox Walden for making this possible!

Agos (Celtic Hearts); Sue (GB.net); Linda (GB Angels); Ashley (The Butler Did It); Kim (GB USA); Dayna (GB GALs); Nicole (GB Network); Fox Walden Rep. and **Gerard Butler**

GB: Hello?

[All greet Gerry - voices overlapping]

GB: I'm speaking to you all at the same time?

[voices overlapping]

Agos: Apparently.

GB: Oh, sh*t. Now, I'm nervous.

?: You'll be ok.

[GB giggling]

?: We don't bite too hard.

GB: Okay. Who— Um, does everyone want to say their name real quick? I mean, I have them, but it's probably better if you say them.

Agos: Hi, this is Agos.

GB: [attempts to pronounce name] Agos?

Agos: Yah.

GB: Okay. Hello, Agos.

Agos: Hello.

Sue: Hi, Gerry. This is Sue. I'm calling from Baltimore, Maryland.

GB: Okay. Hey, Sue.

Linda: Aloha, Gerry. This is Linda, from GB Angels.

GB: Hey. [pause]

Kim: Hi, this is Kim. [voices overlapping]

GB: How are you doing?

Kim: This is Kim, from GB USA.

GB: Hello, Kim.

Nicole: Hello, Gerry, this is Nicole, from GB Network.

GB: Wow. [giggling] I love this. Angels, Hearts, GALS, Network. [All laugh] You must be thinking what else– what other name can we put? GB Strawberry Pie. GB Refrigerator. [all giggling] Sorry. Go on.

Dayna: This is Dayna, with GALS.

GB: Who is this?

Dayna: Dayna, with GALS.

GB: Dayna.

Dayna: Yes!

GB: But, but– I have a Dayna Linton.

Dayna: Okay. This is Dayna Linton, with GALS.

GB: Oh, you said, “Dayna, with GALS.”

Dayna: Well, yeah, Dayna Linton with GALS. [Laughing]

GB: Oh, I’m sorry. It sounded like that was your last name or– I thought you were saying “Dayna Withgal” or something–

Dayna: Yeah.

GB: Hey, Dayna! How are you?

Dayna: I’m doing wonderful! How are you?

GB: I’m good! I’m good. Nice to speak to you again.

Dayna: You, too.

?: This is [voices overlapping - indistinguishable]

Sue: Gerry, I didn't say where I was from. This is Sue from GB.Net.

GB: Who?

Sue: Sue.

GB: Oh, Sue.

Sue: Yeah.

GB: Okay. Yeah, I don't give a sh*t. [all laugh] No, I'm joking. Well, do we have an Ashley?

Ashley: From the-- Yeah, from The Butler Did It.

GB: Okay. The Butler Did It. That's great. That's great. Sue, I hope you didn't take offense. See, you say these things as a joke and the next minute [indistinguishable], "I can't believe he said that! That means he doesn't like GB.Net and that he likes Angels more--"

Sue: Nope. [All laugh] I have two sons-- so, you know...

GB: [giggling] Okay. Okay. Anyway. Welcome, everybody! Hello!

[All thank Gerry]

Joy: Alright [indistinguishable] you want to start asking what's the first question?

GB: Shut up, Joy. [laughter]

Dayna: She's gonna keep you on track.

GB: Okay, Agos.

Agos: Yeah me.

GB: Yes, Agos.

Agos: I'm calling from Argentina, on behalf of Celtic Hearts. And--

GB: Wow!

Agos: Wow, what?

GB: Well, I just always think— I always imagine Celtic was more of a— more of a kinda Scots Irish flavor, so that’s kind of awesome.

Agos: We have people from everywhere, Argentina, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, France, everywhere.

GB: That is so cool.

Agos: Yes, I know. [laughter]

GB: laughter

Agos: I have a question from Cynthia. This is the first time you’ve played two different characters, in the movie, Alex Rover and the dad. We wanted to know if it was difficult to change between the two characters, which one was your favorite and why?

GB: Um, Okay. I guess that’s like three questions, not really one, but...[laughs] it all kinda came together [giggles]

Agos: Okay.

GB: We tried to make sure that I was playing both characters at different times because I don’t want to sound like, you know too much like a , kind of a— like a pretentious actor, but it actually is weird when you jump from one character to another one in the same day especially when they have such kinda big stories going on. So, we tried to avoid it. Well, also it was a whole make-up thing I mean their beards were different lengths, and so, it was also a bit of a— practically, a bit of a pain to swap them over when it was close in time to each other. But it happened and there were certain days I had to jump from Alex Rover to Jack or from Jack to Alex Rover. It felt a little weird, but you know you kinda get away with it, and you think, “you know what? Well, how big of a difference is it really?” Yeah, I could be precious about it, but it wasn’t too bad. I also think that being under the gun like that, actually, it can only help your experience for the future you know, other than when it’s all too easy.

My favorite character? That’s a difficult one— that’s a difficult one, because I really enjoyed them both. To be shooting the sh*t with Jodie Foster and we had so much fun and I really loved our scenes, because they were ones that I really— I got to relate to somebody, and push somebody, and in a very funny way. And to um kinda rip the sh*t out of somebody, I guess I can’t say sh*t... you know, rip the something out of somebody. That was fun. But then again, my stuff with Abigail. Half of that was on the coolest set, over on Hinchinbrook Island, which was just delightful and beautiful and romantic and cool. So I enjoyed that as well. But the thing is with Jack, I spent half the time in the water. And I mean out in the sea, and it wasn’t summer, so I spent half my time soaking wet and freezing, and pretty miserable. So

I would probably say Alex—

Agos: Okay, Thank you.

GB: — for that reason.

GB: Thank you. Hello Argentina.

Agos: [laughter] Thank you. Hello Gerry.

GB: Hello.

Agos: Yep.

GB: Am I asking you a question or are you asking me a question?

Agos: No, I'm done. If you like, I can keep talking.

[garbled] [laughter]

GB: No, but all I heard- I thought you said, “hello Gerry”, so I thought it was the next person!

Agos: Oh no, because you said “hello Argentina”, I was saying hello back at you.

GB: Oh I see! Alright. Well, good-bye. [laughter] Nice talking to you.

Agos: Okay, you too.

GB: Okay, Bye-bye.

Sue: Hi Gerry. It's Sue. You've mentioned in a lot of your interviews lately that you've been getting a lot of good scripts since *300*. After reading this script, *Nim's Island*, what made you say 'I want to do this'?

GB: You know, sometimes a script just has a bit of magic to it, you can't really say “I want to do it 'cause of this, and I want to do it 'cause of that.” You just read something and it really charms you, you know, and I think that I was probably in the midst of a reaction to *300*. I mean, not to take away of how proud I am of that movie, and how much it surpassed my expectations. But then I thought the risk now is to go on, and it was very tempting and there was a lot of offers coming through, to do things very much— similar style to *300*, or in the action genre, and I just didn't want to do that. And I read this script and I found it really touching and really unusual and a lot of fun.

And when it first came to me, it was only one role. And we said, you know what, the one role itself is not big enough, and it was actually my ex-agent, Brandt Joel, who's just left, who suggested that we— that if I played two characters. And suddenly, we looked at it and said, 'That makes perfect sense. How awesome!' Cause it does give it that kind of time quality. So I said you know I'd do it for that. And that's what happened.

I think also to know— you know the hilarious thing is— whenever you men— Jodie Foster has such incredible respect, and whenever I would mention Abigail, people would get so excited! Like as excited if not more than when I mentioned I was working with Angelina Jolie. It'd be like "Oh my God, I love her! She's so incredible!" And I'd be like, "Great. Here we go again. Somebody who's more excited about the person that I'm working with rather than me." I'm getting sick of that.

I tell you what else I'm getting sick of. Hearing "Academy Award Winner blah blah blah, Academy Award Nominee blah blah blah, and GerARD Butler." [full-bodied laughter] Or, I just read one today and it was "Academy Award Winner, Academy Award Nominee, and heartthrob, Gerard Butler." Yeah, I won the Heartthrob Stakes— because you know— it gives them something else to say.

Sue: Thank you.

GB: Thank you.

Linda: Aloha, Gerry. This is Linda from GB Angels, from California.

GB: Hey Linda.

Linda: How are you?

GB: I'm okay. How are you?

Linda: It is so nice to talk to you again.

GB: Hey, you too.

Linda: Hey, congratulations on your Evil Twins production company.

GB: Oh, thank you, thank you.

Linda: We're very excited for you, and we're looking forward to all of your film projects.

GB: Cool, so am I.

Linda: Your Angels would like to know, in this film you play opposite a child and animals. Did you have to ad lib a lot and which was more fun and challenging to act with?

GB: You know, it's hard to play opposite animals, definitely. Especially animals that are— you know I think it would be easier to work with something like a dog— or something that is more domesticated and generally works more with humans. The sea lion was great, but it was definitely more unpredictable. And also HUGE, and I was amazed at how brave Abigail was and, because for me I didn't spend as much time with them. But there was always a slight sense of— as much as 'wow this is incredible'— of like discomfort. Because they are so much bigger than you and their teeth are huge and sharp and they look so pow— I didn't realize just how big and powerful they were. The pelican was massive as well, and it was insane! There was no controlling it. And it once flew behind me and I'm trying to play this scene, not knowing if this thing was about to rip my ear off. It looked apparently like I was growing wings out my back, these massive wings took shape behind me.

But I couldn't call Abigail— it wasn't like working with a child, because she was actually an inspiration to act with. She's so— such a phenomenal actress and such a grown up little kid, and in all the best ways. Not too grown up in an annoying way, just grown up in a professional way, but still sweet and fun-loving. I loved working with her. I was the child, and I was the one that was hard to work with. [laughter]

Linda: Well at least the animals didn't fine you for every swear word. [laughter]

GB: No.

Linda: By the way, how much money did you end up donating?

GB: You know what? Too much— I don't know. I think it ended up, about fifty, sixty dollars or something like that. And there was one time I gave her money and she wouldn't give me change. And then I tried to get credit. Cause I'm like "Okay, you know what, I gave you eight dollars extra, that's another four swear words" and she was like, "I'm sorry son, it doesn't work like that. There's no change in this business, we have to start from scratch." She's a...she's a tough negotiator.

Linda: Well, thanks for answering, Gerry. Hey, are we gonna see you at the Hollywood premiere?

GB: Yes, I'm gonna be there.

Linda: Oh great, thank you.

GB: I'll see you there.

Linda: Okay.

Ashley: Hi Gerry. This is Ashley from The Butler Did It.

GB: Hey, how you doin'?

Ashley: Good, good. I have a question from one of our members in the UK, Claire, in Sussex, England.

GB: Okay.

Ashley: And she wants to know, she says, In *Nim's Island* one of your roles, Alex Rover, is a character from a book of fiction written by Alexandra, Jodie Foster's character. If you could portray one literary character from any favorite novel of yours, which would it be and why?

GB: Um...you just reminded me there's a couple that actually we're trying to do right now, but we have to keep it under wraps, so I can't say. But um...oh God, that's a tough one. Burns is one that everybody knows about and he's been written about in many novels, but if it's a fictionalized character, then, that is...oh God, that's a tough one. I don't know, I don't know.

Do you know what I should say to keep the fans happy? Is that Jamie character from—I've never received a fu— did I just swear?— a novel so many times, from so many, it's always females saying, "you gotta play Jamie in Outlander" just as sure. I don't know if any of you guys have heard of that. [much affirmation] Yeah? Let me get—I'm going to think right now. Because seriously, I'm drawing a blank from thirty-one hours of flying from India. Who do I wanna play in that? That I read in a fiction novel? Did you say a fictional? Or did you just say—

Ashley: Yeah, a fictional character.

GB: A fictional character. Let me get back to you. Cause I am literally drawing a blank right now.

Kim: Hi Gerry, this is Kim from GBUSA.

GB: Hey, Kim.

Kim: One of the girls on the site talks about how from reading the book and seeing the trailers, that Jack's alone a lot whilst out on the sea. So you're kind of playing against yourself. Is it harder to do a scene alone, other than— versus playing against another actor?

GB: Yes, it is. Because obviously you have to explain a lot of your mental processes out loud. And while that's done, it's just harder to do in a more natural way. So one, you've got nobody to play against, so it's hard to adjust your levels, and think, okay,

well what am I reacting against here, you've just reacted to yourself in situations. So it is a little weird, but it's just something you get used to. And like I say, I always try and look at these strange situations, like singing in *The Phantom* or playing with only blue screen in *300*, or this, just dealing with myself, to my advantage, I just try and learn from it. I'll probably watch the film and be like, 'oh God, that sucks', but this is how I can do it better next time.

Kim: Thank you.

GB: Thank you.

Dayna: Okay, this is Dayna.

GB: Hello.

Dayna: How's Hawaii?

GB: How's what?

Dayna: Hawaii.

GB: You know, it's very nice. It's my first time here. Um, I'm staying in a hotel and I came straight here. And, uh, I came from thirty-one hours of traveling from India, so, it, it, it's— um, I'm a little bit jetlagged, so—

Dayna: Oh, I'll bet. [voices overlapping]

GB: So far, I'm a looking at through jetlagged eyes.

Dayna: [laughing] Well, so many of the questions I have, have already been asked. But I thought this was a little bit different twist. And this came from "Good Girl Wild Streak" and, uh, she says, "You seem to often note an emotional connection to the roles you play and I've heard you describe yourself 'as a bad boy with a good heart.' Was there something about the duality of the role of Alex Rover, the bad boy and gregarious adventurer, and Jack, the broken-hearted, loving father, scientist and loner, that you identified with and brought you to this project?"

GB: Um, yeah. Absolutely. They, they, they had kinda both sides of the coin. And then, also, just generally. If you put them both together, made up, kind of— their composite. Um, there joining was just like one human being, with all of it going on. Because it wasn't just like— it wasn't as simple as Alex just being a bad boy and Jack being full of pain. They, they both had a lot of— what I found when I was playing them was, that they actually both had a lot of similarities going on. I mean, they both were very funny. They both had the ability to laugh at themselves. They were both true heroes, hard-working and courageous. So, Jack fell in the, the, the, the more normal

sense of things, but even if you were to say that, you'd think, "Wait a minute. What is 'normal' about a scientist who, who sails round the world a couple of times and then ends up in a little island in the middle of nowhere with just his daughter?" I mean, they both lived pretty insane lives, but— Yeah, without a doubt, Jack is, ah, the more emotional— kind of— emotional end of the scale, with definitely some grief stored in there. Um, you know, you never really feel that Alex, Alex entertains that whatsoever. Um, but I would say, when you put them all together, there's all those parts of me that I identify with, especially in other characters. So, it was— it was interesting and, and lovely to take that on and make those discoveries. Again, if anything came out of that, it was like, "There is no 'black and white' in anybody. Nobody's 'bad.' Nobody's 'good.' We just all have bits of everything inside us."

Dayna: Thank you.

?: True.

Dayna: I apologize. I'm getting a call on another line. [Laughter] If you hear beeping, that's what's happening. Sorry about that—

GB: Take it. Tell them you're a little bloody busy at the moment. [Laughter]

Dayna: I am, darn it! I knew that would happen! Well, thank you very much. I appreciate it.

GB: No problem. Who am I coming back to?

Ashley: It's me. [voices overlapping]

FW Rep: Has everyone asked a question?

GB: Yeah, but I didn't answer— I didn't answer, um—

Ashley: You didn't answer me— [voices overlapping]

Dayna: Ashley.

GB: Ashley, ask me another question. I'm sorry. I can't think. I can't always [voices-overlapping]--

Nicole: I've still gotta ask one.

FW Rep: Yep, Nicole, you still have to ask one.

GB: Oh, Nicole!

Nicole: Yep.

GB: Sorry.

Nicole: Yep.

GB: Okay. Well, meanwhile, Ashley think of another question. Because I don't know if it's gonna come out while I'm— while I'm answering and I just don't want to give a bullshit answer.

Ashley: Okay. [Laughter]

Nicole: Okay. I'm Nicole from Australia.

GB: Hey, Nicole.

Nicole: And I just— I was just wondering how you liked Australia when you were here and what did you get up to on your days off from filming?

GB: Um, when I was down on the Gold Coast—

Nicole: Yeah—

GB: I, um, there was always training to be done anyway in terms of the, the, um, swimming or learning to use a boat, but I did have a bit of time off. And to be honest, it was just— it was kinda beautiful down there, so I spent a lot of time just down on the beach.

Nicole: Yeah.

GB: I would play a lot of football. I went to some, um, Australian Roos football— I went to a couple of their games—

Nicole: [gasps] Ah, yeah!

GB: I mean, it's so easy to meet people down there that I was always taken on these kind of crazy adventures. I ended up finding myself at these charity dinner/dances, and— and, um— like all over the place and seeing some awesome nature—

Nicole: Yep.

GB: —and going up into the mountains and, um, out on, on, on peoples' boats and— so, I kinda got up to a lot. In fact, a friend of mine—

Nicole: Awesome.

GB: —he had a big boat out there. So, one day—

Nicole: Yep.

GB: —we took everybody— all the cast came out on the boat and—

Nicole: Awesome.

GB: —all their families—

Nicole: What did you think about Aussie Roos football?

GB: It was awesome! It was awesome!

Nicole: Yeah!

GB: Who did I go to see? What's the town just down the road from the Gold Coast? Um—

Nicole: Brisbane?

GB: Brisbane!

Nicole: Yep.

GB: I went to see, uh, the Brisbane— Is it the Lions or something?

Nicole: Yep, yep. Brisbane Lions.

GB: And, and I met their main player who took us around for like an hour and a half after the game. He was awesome— the nicest guy! And one of the best sportsman I've, I've ever seen.

Nicole: Yep. Great!

GB: So— that's what I love about Australians. They have no airs and graces. They're just really cool no matter what they do, you know. And, and— And I also got a chance to go to Melbourne a couple of times—

Nicole: Aw, yeah—

GB: —and Sydney. Which—

Nicole: Right.

GB: — are both—

Nicole: Awesome.

GB: I could– Melbourne is the coolest city! I was–

Nicole: Yeah.

GB: I've never been so surprised by a city. And then Hinchinbrook was like being in paradise. You know–

Nicole: Yeah

GB: –a place with rainforests, untouched beaches, mangroves that, that, that apparently one of the top five hikes in the world. I mean, it's pretty incredible.

Nicole: Yeah, Queensland's beautiful.

GB: [reflective] Yeah. Yeah.

Nicole: Yeah.

GB: Good country, you got.

Nicole: [Laughs]

GB: Who, who didn't I answer? Ashley?

Ashley: [Laughing] Yeah. I'm trying to think of another one. Okay. Here, I have one. Um, Ida, from New Jersey, wanted to know– And I know you have your, you know, your production company starting and lots of projects there. But she wanted to know, “Since more and more film stars are crossing over to do television, was there any TV show you'd be interested in perhaps guesting on like a clan leader needing– in 14th Century Scotland helping Dr. Who or whatever?”

GB: No.

Ashley: No. Okay. [laughs]

GB: No. I don't really have any– um, you know, the only thing I'd like to go on is *South Park*. [All laugh] And I don't even know if they're still running anymore, but I wou– I– it's, it's sorta my favorite show. And I would love to go on *South Park*. But, in terms of TV shows– I mean, I've thought about it sometimes– it would be fun to go on that. But, to be honest, I'm, I'm, I'm more than happy just sticking with films.

?: [sounds of door opening] [whispers indistinguishable]

Ashley: Okay, thank you.

?: Gerry?

FW Rep: Okay, ladies. We're gonna wrap it up. Thank you so much for your time.

[All thank Gerry]

GB: Thank you. [voices overlapping] Thank you, ladies. Okay. Take care. Bye-bye.

END