

we finished it on a Friday. And it was sweet, you know? And they were really going to push the show like crazy, and I said, "When will I see my "Director's Cut?" And he said, "You'll see it like everybody else, on the air on Tuesday night." By then, I was totally hooked on the series, and it was a great experience for me to be doing it. And you just gave up all that kind of stuff because we were finishing on a Friday. They edited 48 hours 'round the clock on the weekend. And he said, "If you want, you can come in, and look at a couple of things over the weekend." But I didn't have time, and he said, "It'll be on Tuesday night," and it was. It aired on Tuesday night, and it was three and a half days after we'd finished shooting.

DM: Yeah, it was brilliant, that episode.

WM: But, you know, I had a lot of help, and we had stunt people working, and, at some point, I think we had three different units going because we had a second unit, and we had a couple of stunt groups working, as well as the first unit. And it still took thirteen, fourteen days, I think, to shoot. We shot it out on Universal at this European street back lot. And Bruce had never done Shakespeare in his life. I mean, he'd never done any kind of verse, or anything. He was petrified. He was great.

DM: That was one of the questions I was going to ask. What was the actors'

reaction when they read the script, when they saw they were doing Shakespeare?

WM: Bruce was terrified. And, you know, it turned out great, and *Cybill* was wonderful, too. It was a perfect show for them to do because, basically they are Kate and Petruchio. And I loved doing it because my mom had been a Shakespeare Professor at Wheaton College in Massachusetts, and I grew up learning all the Shakespeare plays, and I'd studied Shakespeare in college. I'd never directed *The Taming of the Shrew*, but the fact that I got to do this incredible takeoff of *Taming of the Shrew* with these two actors who were just fantastic doing it, and with this amazing script... Now, that's the one script that I think we ever did on *Moonlighting* that was never rewritten by Glenn.

DM: Right. Glenn mentioned that in his interview. He hardly touched it.

WM: Well, he didn't because it was all iambic pentameter. It was all in verse. Reno and Osborn had done such a great job with it that he just felt he didn't want to touch it at all. Plus, we needed all that time to prepare it, too. That took a lot of preparation. It took about two weeks to shoot. But, as I said, we had a second unit going a lot, and we had three or four days, actually, of a third unit.

DM: How did you get to

direct this episode? Is it because you were familiar with Shakespeare?

WM: I think so. He called me. I remember I was doing another TV show, and he said, "I got a show that's perfect for you, and I just want to make sure you're available for the dates," because he knew about my mom, and he knew how familiar I was with Shakespeare, and I'd acted in some Shakespeare plays, and things like that. He said, "I think you're the perfect director for this, and I just want to make sure you're available," and he told me the dates, and I said I was, and he said, "Well, I'm going to send you a rough draft, and see if you like it." And I did, and it was just a sensational experience.

DM: And so, do you have any specific memories about that episode? How about shooting *Good Lovin'* in the church with the band?

WM: Oh, it was great, and I didn't know that song, so they gave me a cassette of it, and then I just did all that staging myself. You know, all of (laughs) those hand gestures and stuff, and Glenn told me "Get them doing something." You know, "Get the audience, the common people out there on the pews. Get them doing something." And I said, "Great." I figured I'll do this, and so, I'm up in the front there behind the camera doing all these arm gestures and stuff and, you know, I've learned this song, and everything.

also, having Bruce ride down the aisle on a horse.

DM: Yeah, with the sunglasses.

WM: Yeah, which was sensational, and then we had a lot of stuff out there at Universal. I remember that was the first time I'd ever used a Steady Cam. It was on the crane, so the opening scene of that was... it was fairly new for those times. Now, they use this gimmick all the time, but we had a Steady Cam operator sitting on a crane, and he starts way, way up high, and it was a picture, an old Elizabethan picture that turned into the Village Square.

DM: Right, right.

WM: And the Steady Cam operator came off the crane, and then walked through the crowd of everybody selling stuff before Petruccio came on. That was a big deal

because in those days... Brandon Stoddard, who was the head of ABC at the time, told me that that was the most expensive hour of television at that point ever, ever made. And they still wouldn't tell me how much it was. Nobody wanted to know, but thank God for Brandon because, you know, the show was getting awards, and it was gaining a lot of prestige for ABC.

DM: Yeah, 'cause they were in third place then.



Father and sons. Petruccio and Lucentio listen intently to their father-in-law, Baptista.

DM: He's chasing her around the piano.

WM: Right, right.

DM: You could tell the camera's moving.

WM: It was all hand-held.

DM: Yeah.

WM: That's right. God. You know it better than I. I haven't seen it in so long. It's terrible.

DM: I just watched it, just to prepare myself, even though I've seen it many times before.

WM: Yeah, I'll have to watch it again. It's great. I told you, I get a lot of calls from the DGA for permission to use it at various schools. And I think that's wonderful. My mom, before she passed away, she saw it. In fact, my parents were out here when I won the Director's Guild Award for that. They came out, and

WM: Yeah, I know.

DM: I noticed you also used a hand held camera because the part where Petruccio and Kate are...

WM: Fighting.



Why couldn't this be Maddie's turn? David thought as he prepared the "kids" and America to see "how low can he go!" in *My Fair David*.

it was so exciting, and then she was able to show it to the class that she used to teach. She had retired, but she had a guy that had taken her place that she was very fond of, so she was able to take this episode out to her college, and say, "This is my son's episode. He directed this."

DM: Yeah, it's a great way to introduce kids to Shakespeare.

WM: Oh, it's sensational because they loved those characters in those days, you know?

DM: So, was the experience of directing *Atomic Shakespeare* different from all the other *Moonlighting* episodes you directed?

WM: Well, it was the most ambitious. I'm sure Peter (Werner) would tell you the same thing. He did the Black and White episode (*The Dream Sequence Always Rings Twice*) and that was being done, in fact, when I came on for my first one (*My Fair David*). They were agonizing over that, and that was equally as hard an episode to do, but it got a tremendous amount of acclaim. I think we all said when we tackled Shakespeare, "This is going to be either one of the most acclaimed episodes of the year in television, or it's gonna be a tremendous bomb." And "If Bruce and Cybill can't carry off Shakespeare, and, if it's not directed well, and if it isn't budgeted well, it can be disastrous." Luckily, it wasn't. You know, we were tak-

ing a big, big chance to do something like that. And to take something that's so Elizabethan and old fashioned, and put it in front of a modern day prime time television audience, and have it received well, is an amazing undertaking, I think.

DM: Well, you modernized it, in a sense, where you had elements of *The Three Stooges* and *The Honeymooners*...

WM: Right.

DM: You had the Warner Brothers cartoons...

WM: I met a guy the other day who came up to me, and he was playing a small part in something I was directing, and he said, "Do you remember me?" and, of course, I didn't.

DM: (laughs)

WM: And he said, "I was the hunchback who rang the bell!"

DM: (laughs)

WM: That *Moonlighting* episode, you know, and they gave him one eye, or something, and, of course, I didn't recognize him because he looked totally different. But, that was so much fun to do that, you know? It was great. It was a long time ago. What year was that? You remember?

DM: Yes. 1986, actually. It originally aired November 25, 1986. *Atomic Shakespeare*.

WM: Wow, '86. So, that's like 16 years ago, isn't it?

DM: Yeah. Today is the 25th! Isn't that weird?

WM: Today is the 25th?

DM: 25th of November.

WM: Wow. That is spooky.

DM: That is spooky, huh?

WM: That was 16 years ago today.

DM: Wow, OK. Well, let me talk about one of your other episodes. Obviously, *My Fair David*, because that also brought you a DGA Award, and an Emmy® nomination, as well as *Atomic Shakespeare*...

WM: And, it was the first one I'd ever done for them.

DM: Yes, so the opening with David limbo-ing, what can you tell us about directing that sequence?

WM: You know what I remember about that? I was kind of on trial, and I don't know what else I'd been doing at the time. It must have been '85...

DM: This was, yeah, in '85.

WM: I'd been doing a lot of *Family Ties* episodes, and a lot of 4-camera comedy. But, I remember a director friend of mine saying, "You know, to win over actors, if you can give them a piece of business right off the bat that they like, something that,

you know, just makes the script a little more accessible to them, that's great." And I remember I worked with Cybill first because she had to tell some big joke, and it was hard for her doing it.

DM: **Something about a duck, I think. Right? Something about a man walking in a bar with a duck under its arm?**

WM: That's it. Yeah, yeah, and so I worked with her on that, and she appreciated that. You know, I think a lot of the directors don't give the actors that much time. They're very concerned about the camera shots, but they're not concerned about how the actors are behaving, and I'm very concerned about the actors' behavior. I was just trying to help her, and make her feel comfortable, and all that, and she appreciated it. And so, when Bruce came in, I remember she said, "Listen to this guy. He's really good," which was so sweet of her to say because I didn't know her from Adam, and so he did, and I gave him a couple of pieces of business when he was doing this limbo thing that he loved. And, by then, in a sense, you've won them over, and they trust you. You want them to be successful, and we're all in the same boat. You know, that we just are look-



"I don't know about her birthday wish, but I sure got mine." David thought seconds before he and Maddie woke up to find out the stiff sleepwalked out of his coffin in *In God We Strongly Suspect*.

ing for a really, really good show. So, that was kind of a trial and error situation for me, but after the second or third day, I felt very, very comfortable on that set. The cinematographer was a lovely guy who became a friend. And, in fact, I got him a job later on, on a 4-camera show, because he was getting older, and he didn't want to do those crazy hours that *Moonlighting* was doing, and so I said, "What about him coming over to this series with me?" And, you know, it was an easier workload for him.

DM: **Was that Jerry Finnerman?**

WM: Yeah. Jerry Finnerman. He's a lovely man, and so I have a lot of really, really nice, nice memories of that.

DM: **Well, that episode is**

one of the funniest in the series, and a lot of the comedy in that episode, as well as some of the others you directed, has a lot of physical comedy in it.

WM: Well, that's what I like. Yeah, I do a lot of that stuff still, even now.

DM: **And so, in your direction, you brought in that element?**

WM: I'm sure a lot of it was in the script. But I just take it, and try to run with it a little bit. You know, go a little further, and if they don't like it, they can always take it out, but, I'd show them things, and they'd say, "That's really good." And again, that's just from doing a lot of theater. I do a lot of theater, and I do a lot of 4-camera stuff. I think that the director's job in the television business is to bring as much to that script as you possibly can. A lot of times the staging isn't written into the script, and that's the director's job... that you have to not only stage it, but bring in bits of business. Make it funnier.

DM: **Now, another one of your episodes, if you recall, was *In God We Strongly Suspect*.**

WM: (chuckles) I'm trying to remember that. Oh, you'll have to refresh... 'cause I haven't seen any of these in so long.

DM: Okay. Well, this episode opens up with David and Maddie telling the audience that the episode was shot in 3-D. And that the US Postal Service was late in mailing out 3-D glasses.

WM: Right, right. (Laughing)

DM: Now, was there any discussion about shooting that or any episodes in 3-D?

WM: It was just done as a joke. Is there one where Robert Joy was in with Barbara Bain?

DM: Yes. That's *My Fair David*.

WM: That was the first one when he's a concert pianist, and they come in and beat him up, or something?

DM: Right, because he's a gambler and he's extorting money from his stepmom. That is interesting. It starts off very dramatically, and then it's a comedy. *Moonlighting* was then coined as a dramedy, and I think that's why it was kind of confusing about how to nominate that show, whether it was a comedy or a drama.

WM: Yeah, I know. And I don't know whether we nominated it in a comedy category, or we kept it in a one-hour...

DM: Drama, I believe. They kept it in as drama, and that's how they classified it.

WM: Yeah.

DM: Even though it was a comedy, for the most part. So, in *In God We Strongly Suspect*, that episode was also a victim of the ABC censors. Do you recall that sequence about the "flying frig," and "flying fig?"

WM: No.



What was God thinking when he made this guy? Maddie thought playfully after David alluded to why he wouldn't sleep over her.

DM: Oh, okay. In that episode it's her birthday, and she's kind of depressed over it, and he makes a comment about, "The crow's feet around your eyes, and the millimeter your caboose has dropped..." And she says to him, "Well, I don't give a flying frig..." That was the way it was supposed to be said. That's what Glenn told us in his interview, and the network fought him on it...

WM: Really?

DM: And they took out the "R," and it came out as "flying fig."

WM: Oh, wow! No, I don't remember that at all. That's interesting. Wow. What was the plot of that? What was the plot of *In God We Strongly Suspect*?

DM: About this magic act where the husband...

WM: Oh, God. Let me tell you about that! We got this little man to play a... like a Santa Claus, who was supposed to be God. Yeah. It was a little old man who ran a magic shop.

DM: Yes, yes, yes!

WM: Oh, you know what happened? The day we were shooting that scene, Christa McAullife was blown up in the Challenger. I'll never forget that. We were at a

warehouse downtown shooting that, and I lined up this incredible dolly shot through these magic toys and stuff, and *Cybill* and this little old guy... we found this wonderful old actor to play... He's supposed to be God, and he looked kind of like Santa Claus, and he was this unique little character. The poor man was so old that he couldn't remember the lines, and I couldn't get the shot that I wanted because I wanted it to be non-stop from the beginning to the end. So, I had to figure out how was I gonna cut this up, 'cause the man obviously couldn't do this shot the way I wanted to. So, we were going to break it up, and do it in cuts. Suddenly, there's this pall over the place, and it turns out that the Challenger has blown up, and we closed down. I think we closed down for the whole day.

DM: Yeah. I have that episode airing in February of '86, so that's the time it happened.

WM: Yeah. Oh, God, that was a wild thing 'cause I remember being out there, and working, trying to work out this shot, and, suddenly, our whole day changed because of that, and... I think we then came back in the next day, and, by then, you know, I re-did the shot, and got the guy to do it fine, but I had to do it in pieces, and stuff like that. That's right. God. Well, that was a good episode, I think. It turned out well, if I remember.

DM: Yes, because that

episode is also where we find out that David believes in God, and Maddie doesn't.

WM: Right, right.

DM: Which was kind of interesting 'cause you would have thought it would be the other way around.

WM: Yeah, exactly.

DM: It would be the more immoral David who didn't believe in God.

WM: Oh, it was typical Glenn because he always gave you something that surprised you.

DM: Now, another episode was *The Bride of Tupperman*, and you were credited with Christian Nyby.

WM: I'll tell you exactly why that happened. We stopped doing that after awhile. Instead of a director's "chair" on *Moonlighting*, there was a director's "bench," because the episodes would go so long. It would take so long to do an episode that you would have another job to go to, and, most of us that are working in the television business have our lives fairly well booked up ahead. So, you know, you try to leave a couple of days leeway, but, if you think you're going to finish something on January 25th; then you'll start another job on January 28th, or something like that. Well, with

Moonlighting, it just didn't follow any rules. You know, they were supposed to do their shows in eight or nine days, and it took twelve, thirteen, fourteen days, and the scripts didn't come down on time, and all of that. So, that was one of those shows that I'm sure that I started it, and Chris finished it because Chris did a lot of them. And, you know, we shared credits. But then, after awhile, we just decided whoever did the most work would get the credit because it looked like to a lot of people that somebody screwed up. And it just wasn't good for our reputations, and everything. So, that's one of the few, I think, that has a shared credit on it.

DM: Right. When I saw the shared credit, I thought, "Oh, maybe one of them had to leave beforehand for some reason."

WM: That's exactly what happened. I left because I had to go to some other show. I don't know what it would have been. Chris was doing the next episode, so he came in, and finished my episode, and then started his own episode.

DM: Well, that episode, if you recall, was about where David and Maddie were in search of the perfect woman for a client.

WM: Oh, yeah. Right.

DM: And that episode