

No./11 "I've been preparing for Logan Roy all my life"

[THE Q&A] **BRIAN COX** is back spitting insults for the new season of *Succession* — but a new memoir finds him in a reflective mood

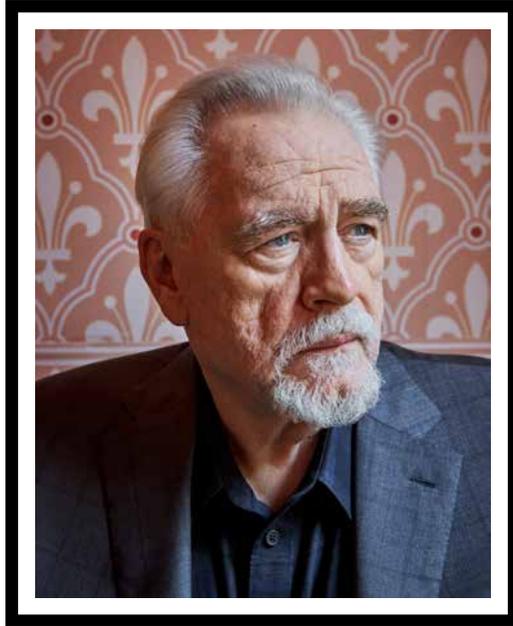
FOR A LEGION of viewers, Brian Cox is now best known as fire-breathing über-CEO Logan Roy in Jesse Armstrong's comedy-drama *Succession*. But as his new memoir, *Putting The Rabbit In The Hat*, reveals, it's been a long journey to Logan: from Cox's Scottish working-class roots to numerous high-profile roles in films such as *Braveheart* and *Manhunter* — plus lesser-known parts along the way, including one in *The Glimmer Man* alongside Steven Seagal, an actor he declares "as ludicrous in real life as he appears on screen". With *Succession's* third season now airing, Cox doesn't hold back.

Does Logan Roy feel like your defining role?

Well, you can't ignore poor Logan [laughs]. He is a formidable character. It's a gift of a role, but it's also the culmination of my work. I come to a point now where I've been given this incredible thing to do. I've been preparing for it all my life, in a way, that one day the role would come along. The one thing I've really tried to be good at was my job. That is the best thing in my life — my work.

Where can Logan go from here?

I think he's still dealing with stuff. We don't get to see the reason why he is [the way he is] just yet. What's lovely about the gift of Logan is his mystery. We're going to be doing Season 4 in June and I think a whole new paradigm is going to be coming into play, where viewers will see Logan in, I think, a very different light. What I love about Logan is that he always comes in at just the right point. He may only have two scenes an episode, but they're always memorable, because they're the scenes that everything else is building up towards.



Do you prefer working in television to film?
I've always been a great believer in television; I think television is way ahead and much more interesting than the cinema now. A long form means that you can really do something over ten episodes which you

Top: *Braveheart* Brian Cox. Above: As Logan Roy in Season 3 of *Succession*, the role he feels to be the culmination of his career.

can't do in a three-act film drama: you don't have the time, you haven't got the space

In your autobiography, you seem to pine for the cinema of your youth...

Yes, the cinema I loved doesn't exist anymore. There are no Darryl Zanucks, there are no Louis B. Mayers. Cinema is very different now, it's all about Marvel, it's all about DC. It's kind of been taken over by superheroes, which I find I have not much time for, because I'm going. "Why don't we just deal with real folk?" Marlon Brando in *On The Waterfront*, James Dean in *East Of Eden*, or Marilyn Monroe in *Bus Stop* — these are

the stories that interest me. I'm not interested in Superman's struggle with Kryptonite.

You also write about your working-class roots. Who inspired you, growing up?
Albert Finney meant a lot to me as a young actor. I saw him in *Saturday Night And Sunday Morning* when I was 14. He talked about his background, being a bookie's son, and I thought, "It's possible." He gave me hope. Somebody coming from the background I came from wouldn't have a path towards acting now. The '60s were the most amazing time: there was such social mobility. I was encouraged to go south, go to drama school, to learn my craft, and I had a grant, all my education and expenses paid for. Nowadays you have to pay for your education and it's absolutely disgraceful. That's why I'm a socialist. Now, we just don't take care of our own: we've failed so miserably at that.

There's a great Michael Powell quote in your book, too: "In movies, there are no big parts or small parts. There are only long parts and short parts."

Yes, it was such a revelation when I read that. I'm besotted by the supporting actors, actors that people don't even know, but they are the glue of a movie. I realised that was what I could do when I was young. Even in *Succession* now, I am centrifugal to the narrative, but the narrative goes on despite me.

We take it from your book that you're unlikely to work with Steven Seagal again. No. A Glimmer Man sequel isn't going to happen.

ELIZABETH AUBREY

PUTTING THE RABBIT IN THE HAT BY BRIAN COX IS ON SALE NOW

David Mendelman/August, Alamy, Marvel

No./12 Something Coen-y this way comes

How The Tragedy Of Macbeth was a Coen/Shakespeare fusion foretold

THE PRICE OF AMBITION

Macbeth's fatal flaw is political ambition, and then going on a killing spree. Likewise: Johnny Casper takes over the rackets in *Miller's Crossing*; Norville Barnes ascends the corporate ranks in *The Hudsucker Proxy*; Lewelyn Moss grabs the cash in *No Country For Old Men*; and Ed Crane, noodling Californian barber in *The Man Who Wasn't There*, is seduced by the dry-cleaning business.

WITCHES, GHOSTS AND DREAMS

A triumvirate of wackadoodle hags sets Macbeth on his path to ruin — and so we see the bumbling escapees of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* waylaid by a trio of siren-like washerwomen, while in *A Serious Man*, harried Larry Gopnik seeks answers from a trio of increasingly circumspect rabbis, and a prophetic spirit or 'dybuk' comes calling in that film's folktales opening. Meanwhile, Norville Barnes is instructed by an angelic Waring Hudsucker, Barton Fink's loopy-loo neighbour Charlie Meadows is generally taken to be an apparition, Ed sees flying saucers in *The Man Who Wasn't There*, and Tom Regan chases his hat in *Miller's Crossing*.

LADY MACBETH

There are numerous echoes of literature's scheming spouse and her slippery marbles. Maude Lebowski is a cool customer big on spots in her strongly vaginal avant-garde paintings.

Top to bottom: Denzel Washington and Frances McDormand in *The Tragedy Of Macbeth*, Julianne Moore in *The Big Lebowski*, Josh Brolin as Lewelyn Moss in *No Country For Old Men*.



Doris Crane goes crackers in *The Man Who Wasn't There*. But the prime example is surely Walter in *The Big Lebowski*, whose advice to BFF (né spiritual spouse) The Dude is the root cause of the escalating crisis.

BEST-LAID PLANS

As Loren Visser, devilish private eye in *Blood Simple*, muses: "Something can always go wrong." It's an axiom of both Shakespearean and Coen landscapes that no-one ever gets away clean. See: *Blood Simple*, *Fargo*, *No Country For Old Men* et al. IAN NATHAN

THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH IS IN SELECT CINEMAS THIS WINTER AND ON APPLE TV+ FROM 14 JANUARY



No./13 THIS MEANS WARLOCK

Four things you need to know about Adam Warlock, the MCU's newest ultra-powered superhero



1 HE'S A PERFECT HUMAN

Adam Warlock is basically perfect: a genetically engineered über-human. As well as possessing the powers of flight, super-strength, and the ability to channel cosmic energy (among others), Warlock can never truly die, able to endlessly regenerate in a cosy cocoon of his own making.

2 HE ONCE DEFEATED THANOS

Warlock was called upon during the Infinity Gauntlet comic run to help defeat Thanos — a truly rare feat. Warlock then briefly wielded all six Infinity Stones himself to become a quasi-supreme being. Thanos also once killed Warlock in an early tussle. Luckily, he got better.

3 HE MIGHT BE A BADDIE

In the comics, Warlock is a self-appointed saviour of worlds. But his arrival in the MCU, teased in *Guardians Vol. 2*, hints at a different motivation: he is created by Ayesha (Elizabeth Debicki), High Priestess of the Sovereign, as "capable of destroying the Guardians Of The Galaxy". Uh-oh.

4 HE'S BEING PLAYED BY A BRIT

Will Poulter will play Warlock in *Vol. 3*, reportedly beating Regé-Jean Page and George MacKay to the role; director James Gunn called him an "amazing actor and wonderful guy". Poulter called it "a genuine honour to play this role". Filming is due to begin next month. JOHN NUGENT