

## Three Patch Podcast – Episode 106

*Arwel Wyn Jones Q&A*

July 1, 2020

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## Arwel Wyn Jones Q&A

Consulting Fans: Fox, Chase, Cumbercookie, Emma Grant, Fin Amour, Merinda, Science, Sunday Duck, and B, Producer: Fox, Editor: Emma  
– Our May 10, 2020, discussion with Arwel Wyn Jones, production designer for *Sherlock*, *Doctor Who*, and *Wizards vs. Aliens* (among others), in which he talks about *Sherlock* set design, his career, and how he's been keeping busy during lockdown.

*(Music intro: Manic Street Preachers, National Treasure – The Complete Singles: A Design for Life)*

***Male voice, singing:***

*Our design for life  
Our design for life  
Our design for life  
Our design for life*

*(Music fades)*

**Fox**

Well, hi Arwel! Thank you so much for joining us today. Um, I'm Fox. I'm the one who's been emailing you. And I'm joined here with:

**Chase**

Chase.

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**Cumbercookie**

Cumbercookie.

**Emma**

Emma.

**Fin Amour**

Fin Amour.

**Merinda**

Merinda.

**Science**

Science.

**Sunday Duck**

Sunday Duck.

**B**

and B!

**Arwel**

Hi!

**Multiple speakers**

Hello, hi.

**Fox**

So how are you doing? What are you drinking tonight?

**Arwel**

I'm not drinking anything tonight. I drank too much last night. Just coffee.

**Multiple speakers**

Oh yeah.

**B**

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Yeah, I also, I drank too much last night so it's water today. So, we have our first question for you. What brought you to set design as a career and why do you love it? Or I mean, I assume you love it. You've been doing it for a while.

### Multiple speakers

[laughter]

### Arwel

Yeah, I quite love it. I just as a kid always loved films and TV and stuff. And while I meddled in other things to start with, I kind of always wanted to be involved in it somehow. So when I was 21, I started approaching all different companies. There were little independent companies in Wales that make programs in Welsh for Welsh TV. And eventually I got, I managed to get the list, the alphabetical order list of all these companies and was contacting them and got to a company called Opus, who were crewing up at the time. So I went for an interview and got a job as a runner. And just started like that. And then, having grown up on a farm, where you turn your hand towards things in order to be able to get along, the art department kind of seemed to be my route, really. So I started, after a couple of years of running, I started helping out the art department a bit, and kind of just gradually worked my way up.

### Fin Amour

Awesome. So can you tell us how you went from working on a farm to working on the set of *Sherlock*?

### B

Some fun stuff in between.

### Arwel

But yeah, so you know, I worked on various things over the years and then got a call to go have a chat about the relaunch of *Doctor Who*, for the Christopher Eccleston series, and got a job as a standby art director on that series. Then slowly over the series became supervising art director, but I'd already been designing for commercials and for Welsh TV and stuff prior to that. So when the jobs came along, like *Sarah Jane Adventures*, it kind of made it easier for me to go with an offshoot and kind of run with a lot of the same people that were involved in *Doctor Who* to do those. And then the opportunity came up about *Sherlock* and I'd loved the stories of the kid and I remember going to see it with Edward Thomas, the designer on *Doctor Who* at the time, and going, "This is one of the few things that could take me away from *Doctor Who*, is *Sherlock* and please, you know, if the chance

comes can we, can I do it?" And so I did the pilots and then got on really well with Sue [Vertue] and then I was asked to do the series from there.

## **Science**

Awesome.

## **B**

I have a question before we move on. I have a question about the UK film industry, like do you find since it is more like a centrally located area that you kind of know everybody, like you're kind of working on the same projects or stuff? I've worked here and it's so spread out.

## **Arwel**

What do you mean by a centrally located area?

## **B**

Like the UK in general.

## **Arwel**

Yeah, the UK in general is considerably smaller, but it still takes us hours to get from one bit to another.

## **B**

Yeah, yeah!

## **Arwel**

So I know a lot of the people in South Wales, which is where we did *Sherlock* and *Doctor Who* and everything. And then over the years, as I've worked on different things in different places, I've got to know other people. But yeah, no, whilst we call it a small world, it is a vastly expanding world at the moment in the UK. So there's a lot of people that work in it that I don't know.

## **B**

I mean, yeah, sorry not to assume that you would know everybody. [laughing]

## **Arwel**

Yeah, yeah, but. But in a localized way, like there's people that work in London mostly that know lots of London people. I know most of the South Wales crews.

## Sunday Duck

So getting into the specifics of the *Sherlock* set itself. Can you discuss some of the differences in the set design between the pilot and the first episode that actually aired?

## Arwel

Yes. And like I was saying, I was actually working on *Children of Earth*, *Torchwood*, as a standby art director there during the early, early prep on the pilot, so the actual design of the set was already underway. So I did more of the set dec by that by that point. But what we were lucky with really is, it's very rarely do you get to do such an experiment and look at what worked and what didn't work these days. You know, pilots tend to be episode one of that series. Because the BBC wanted something longer and slightly different in scale, we were able to revisit. And the culture I remember is that when we did the pilot, it was very much a Sherlock Holmes story with elements of the 20th century. But then when we flipped it --er, 21st century, right, I should say -- it was a 21st century story with elements of Sherlock Holmes. Because they found that when they were looking at it, the moments where he was very firmly in the modern day were their favorites, and it worked really well. So when we went to redesign the set and especially the decor, I kind of started in the '50s and then layered, because we also wanted to kind of sell the idea that it was a rentable transient space, so that you know, many people have been there and left a trace, a bit of a mark and stuff. So just layered on top of each other, these different eras and various things, but kind of never went further than the '50s, really. There's a couple of elements that might be a little bit older in the furniture, but generally speaking, we've tried to go decade by decade from the '50s to kind of-- And it really was just a tool or a mechanics for me to get away with putting in patterns and textures that you wouldn't *really* get next to each other in a space that you really live in.

## Science

Well, this is certainly a show where our fans love to look at every single tiny detail in everything. And I'm wondering--

## Arwel

Yeah.

## Multiple speakers

[laughter]

## Science

I'm wondering if there are details that, things that stand out to you that's something that you focused on that maybe nobody did notice, or an Easter egg that nobody has figured out.

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**Arwel**

Well, I've been trying to out these on Instagram slowly over the last few weeks. A lot of people have seen most. To be honest with you, what I find remarkable is that people seem to find Easter eggs that aren't there, more than what I had put in.

**Science**

We're good at that too!

**Arwel**

You know, that is incredible. I mean, you know, from documenting all the books on the bookcase to the pictures on the wall in Kitty's flat. Both of those were, you know, not -- The books aren't quite random, but they're not individually chosen. You know, there are a few in there because they should be there, but a lot of them are just packers. And the pictures in Kitty's flat were actually already there. We redecorated and put them back up in the order they were there. Because it was an art director on *Casualty*, a show that's filmed in Cardiff, it was her flat and she'd done- I just liked the way she'd done her room. So we just redecorated, put a wallpaper up, obviously.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Arwel**

But then put the pictures back up where they were. There was a whole Tumblr post about a link to every single picture to a backstory in Sherlock Holmes, which I thought was quite remarkable sleuthing, but had nothing to do with me!

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Chase**

Oh my gosh. So speaking sets, which one is your favorite? And if you can't pick a favorite set, maybe some favorite details from a couple.

**Arwel**

The favorite has to be the 221B lounge. You know, it has the iconic elements that become synonymous with the show. But if I had to pick a set from an episode, it would be Sherrinford, because I really got to have fun with that, you know. It was a bit of a nod to the

old Bond movies and Ken Adams, who had passed away that year as well. So it was kind of a nice nod to him and also great to actually play with something of that scale.

### **Emma**

Speaking of favorites, do you have any favorite memories from the filming of Sherlock that you can share with us?

### **Arwel**

Aw yeah, see, this is often a question that I get asked like, you got any funny anecdotes or stories about, from the set and stuff and memory? I mean, yeah, you do. But it's not necessarily... makes, you know, good entertaining stories.

### **Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

### **Arwel**

The Sherrinford sets, for example, when actors walked on for the first time they were incredibly complimentary, and it was really nice. Two of them had worked on Bonds for different eras and they were very complimentary. And when we did The Empty Hearse, when Benedict and Martin walked onto the subway car that we built with a bomb in the bay. And both were incredibly complimentary in that and you know, they'd just returned from *The Hobbit* and *Doctor Strange*.

### **Science**

Yeah!

### **Arwel**

So, you know, once again it was really nice to have those kinds of compliments from... so those are the kinds of really cool memories. I have a lot of memories of pain, erm--

### **Multiple speakers**

[laughter, awws]

### **Arwel**

--from trying to make, from making-- No, no, not pain because of hours and everything, but you kind of knew that you're doing something special, so it's worth it. But that first series, one of my anecdotes is that we came back from Christmas break with a day of prep before the start of filming. My first day off was in March.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter, awws]

**B**

Geez!

**Arwel**

So that was quite, you know, I couldn't do it now. I was much younger and sillier then. So yeah, I wouldn't take that to...

**B**

Is that typical for a series? Or was that just for--

**Arwel**

I mean, yeah, that still does being one of the toughest jobs I've ever done for quite some time. That was only beaten by *Wizards vs Aliens* really.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter, wows]

**Arwel**

That was only because I was, you know, being too over-ambitious on a kids' show budget, so it was my own fault.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Emma**

Were there any mishaps on the set or times when things almost didn't come together or didn't go quite the way you planned?

**Arwel**

Oh, there's loads, but I can't tell you about any of them.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]



**Arwel**

I mean, you know, the, the gag about "don't lean on that, the paint's still wet" is not so much of a gag as a very common thread. The smell of paint, you know, the actors associate *Sherlock* with the smell of paint!

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Science**

I love it.

**Cumbercookie**

So I have to imagine that working on *Sherlock* was a really interesting experience, but I'd love to hear from you what it was like to work on that set and maybe how it changed over the years because it ran for so long.

**Arwel**

Yeah, I mean, it ran for so long, but then, you know, we work on it for four to five months, nearly touching six sometimes, every two to three years. So it's broken up a lot. So the success of the show between series one and two and especially after two, I suppose, made it more special coming back. And Sue [Vertue] was very good at bringing the family back together, so getting the same crew back. So it was always nice to have that kind of reunion in a way and also, you're all very aware that you've got to keep the quality up, you know, because it's got this kind of status by then and then you've got to try and up the scale, or up the ante. So that's -- I suppose you're kind of aware of that as well. But it did, you know, change. It changed quite a few of our lives, I think, between everything. I wouldn't be doing what I do now, I don't think, if it hadn't been for *Sherlock*.

**B**

What kind of tracking system did you have, to keep your continuity going between such a long amount of time?

**Arwel**

Just photographs.

**B**

Just photographs?

**Arwel**

Yeah, yeah. You photograph sets anyway. Claire [Pritchard-Jones] often says to me, I'm in the wrong job anyway because I dress a set and get it nice, and then I hate it when the crew turn up and take it apart.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Arwel**

Because that's the first thing they do. You dress a set so everyone gets to see it, they run a scene, and the first thing they do is take half of it out to get the equipment in and do all that. So one of the first things your standby crew do and your prop team is, once it's dressed and we're happy with it, is photograph it all, because you have to take it apart and put it back together, well, numerous times in a day. So then you'll have all these continuity photos anyway. [laughing] It kinda became a bit of a running gag, really, in that we didn't change the dressing, you know, over the years, for however many years it lasted, the things were all in the same place because it was kind of, that was the thing. Even when it'd been empty for, when we walked in on Empty Hearse, you know, the idea was that it had been kept exactly the same. And even after we blew it up, we had to redress it to be nearly as close as it was before. You know, it's kind of just because that's what we thought they'd do.

**Sunday Duck**

So roughly how many people did it take to build the main sets and to decorate them?

**Arwel**

The actual construction team on tour was very small, to be honest, especially in the first few series, until we had to bring extra people in to build the bigger things. But we'd have a team of four carpenters and three painters. That would be it.

**Sunday Duck**

That's it?!

**Arwel**

And we normally... the lead into the first act would be about six weeks to rebuild 221B, all the elements: the ground floor, the main set and anything else we needed. And then we'd have a team of five prop guys: prop master, charge hunt, installment, and two dressing props. Then they would do all the prop dressing, and a set decorator that would oversee them. So it's not a very big thing at all, but you know, and it's not a very big budget. Often... It's kind of, it's like a double-edged sword because people think you have this massive

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budget to do things with, which is kind of a compliment. But then it also maybe makes people less aware of how much you've achieved for so little, you know?

### **Emma**

So what was the most challenging set over the years?

### **Arwel**

I mean, they have different challenges, you know. Some sets, ones that you need to just pull it - pardon my baseness, but pull out your ass quick, in order to get them out of, you know, if we haven't been able to get a location or something so you need to really do it quickly, are the ones that are just technically difficult. Like the subway car I mentioned earlier, because you have to get it so correct. And then there was Sherrinford. That was massive, you know, and we had the cantilevered computer room there that was above. Cuz these are all, you know, I bring these things upon myself, because that's the design we went for, so then you've got to solve it. Yeah. So there's various ones really, various things. Sometimes just the complexity of things like blowing up 221B, you know, in that our schedule dictated that on the last few days, we had to be both filming in the redecorated one and the blown up one. So I had to take some elements and create a blown up 221 whilst we were decorating and making good the real one. And also, I was promised...[laughing] a few days to redress the new one because, you know, we had to put some new stuff in. And obviously, it's that iconic space, so I wanted some time on it. Due to restriction on a couple of things, in the end, we ended up with an hour over lunch to kind of finish it off, you know, whilst they were filming, and then another hour, maybe, whilst they were filming on the other set. And having to bring the little bit of stuff in from the blown up set, just to finalize it just as the crew were arriving. So things like that kind of test you because you're up against time, and it's no one's fault. It just happens that something happens that you need to tweak things in the schedule. So you end up in those situations. And that's what the art department is there for, I think, is to help out as much as possible.

### **Fox**

So I was wondering, there's a few of us who attended the last Sherlocked in Los Angeles. And we got to see the massive deleted scene that was filmed but never aired. And I was wondering whether there's been other scenes like that, that, you know, you spent a lot of time putting together and--

### **Arwel**

Which one was it, sorry?

**Fox**

Oh, Rachel Talalay showed us the whole, the dream sequence where Sherlock was going into the cab and then kind of being shown various scenes from, from what happened during--

**Arwel**

The transitions we didn't use and stuff, yeah?

**Fox**

Mm hmm, yes.

**Arwel**

Oh, yeah. You have elements of things that will always hit the cutting room floor. Apparently there was another couple of bars in the pub crawl stag night thing. I didn't make it, to tell you, I couldn't comment. And it's all to do with running time and tightening a story and getting the beats running and stuff. So it's more of an editorial decision, so long as the story itself isn't implicated. And that's why they do it. But, you know, it tends to be bits of things rather than entire scenes. There'll be elements of stuff that won't impact the overall story, but will tighten up the whole running time and beats, story beats, because they tell it in the edit suite, really. I can't think of anything that was a big whole chunk that was ever removed. The Rachel stuff, for example, we were discussing these transitions, and we did various things to try to do as practical transitions from scene to scene. Like we built the sets for Mycroft's office next to the Moroccan apartment with a mirror so that the cameraman could actually follow straight through from one to the other, and things like that. But then it started becoming all about the transitions rather than being the Sherlock we know, so I think that's why they chose not to do them in the end.

**Fin Amour**

So I was just wondering, as the show grew in popularity, it kind of became a common thing for fans to begin showing up during filming and around the set. How did that influence your work at all? And how did it change over the years as the series grew in popularity?

**Arwel**

It changed from a couple of people turning up to watch us to -- there was, I think 3,000 at one point, from what I understand.

**B**

My God! No pressure.

**Arwel**

Yeah, yeah. So it impacts more about the filming day. Not so much my work because I tend to be the day before, you know, getting things ready, or a couple of days before. It impacted me personally because I was tweeting stuff. I would get shouted at...

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Arwel**

Or welcomed when I turned up and stuff, you know, which is quite strange. But yeah, not, as far as my job, it didn't really change it. On the day of filming, you know, I have to say, it was the most well behaved mob you'd ever seen. They'd be be actually quiet, they'd move across from back of shot to the other back of shot and and they would move like, "hello!" And also there was a bit of rubbish left once and someone asked them and they all went back and picked up all the rubbish and cleaned up the street!

**B**

Aww!

**Arwel**

Yeah, it was incredible. So they were the best behaved fans I think I've ever come across.

**Fin Amour**

That's great to hear.

**Cumbercookie**

So did you expect the show to get quite as big as it did?

**Arwel**

I don't think *anyone* expected it to be quite as big as it did. I remember, because we shot out of order in the first series. So the first episode we shot was The Great Game. And then while we were shooting The Blind Banker, Paul [McGuigan] invited me to the edit suite to go and have a look at what they were doing. And I knew then that it was something different and special, you know, for what they were doing with the text on the screen and the way he was allowing pauses and moments of silence, rather than just talk, talk, talk. And it was very cinematic in the way it looked and was being shot. So you kind of knew it was something different and special. And so you hope it's going to be a success, but you never imagined it to be what it became, really. One of the elements of it, you know, it's like -- I've told the story a few times that when my painter was putting the wallpaper up in 221B, both Paul,

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who had had been in discussions with me about wallpapers, walked through and said to him, "Oh, I hope Arwel knows what he's doing." And Edward Thomas, the designer on *Who* walked through, because the Tardis was in the studio next door, and looked at it and shook his head and went, "Oh, dear."

## **Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

## **Arwel**

So it was a gamble, doing certain things like that, but then for that to kind of become not just synonymous with the show, but also well, you know, Cumbercookie's background there, you know. It's on various websites and so you know, it's become part of the folklore in a way. So that's kind of cool.

## **Science**

Sort of along those lines, there's a lot of iconic pieces in the different sets. And we're wondering, are there any cool origin stories for any of these items, like especially in 221B, like an interesting way that something in particular came to be in there and then it turned out to be a great idea?

## **Arwel**

Well, just over Chase's shoulder there is Mr. Blue Skull. John [Pinkerton], the artist for that, he'd done it... I think he was talking about the -- he'd been working on something in Sarajevo or something somewhere like that, where he had the original idea and he was doing these kind of cutouts that he was spraying through onto some woods and stuff in the workshop one day when I was walking through. And they were like, in, you know, he had three layers, essentially, that he was spraying and then take one off and spray the next one. And I asked him whether he could put it onto three different layers of Perspex in order to kind of give it a 3D feel. And he kind of misunderstood me in a way. He did it on three levels of Perspex, but put them together. So it had a certain amount of 3D but not the distance I'd originally wanted. But I thought it ended up looking really cool. So we put it on the wall, which partly was why I always had this itch that I hadn't done, which is why I did the other skull for the last series, but also because John owns the original Mr. Blue Skull, and we were blowing up 221B. So I really was time for undecorating. So it gave me an opportunity to do something of my own to put into the set, as well. So that's why it ended up [there]. And I quite like the idea of glowing it, but not everyone did. So therefore, sometimes it glowed, and sometimes if the director thought it was too distracting in the back of shot, they'd tone it down. That's all that is!

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Sunday Duck**

Oh wow, okay.

**Science**

But to us, it's very meaningful! There must have been a really good reason behind it.

[laughter]

**Arwel**

In that one, there's five layers and there's about a 10 millimeter gap between each one. So when you look at it straight, it just looks like a straight painting but as you move across it, there is a slight movement. So it gives me nearly like a holographic 3D effect, which is what I was trying to achieve, really.

**Chase**

That's really cool. So speaking of specific set items, the skull obviously is a big one. But another one fans kind of fixated on was the elephants on set in their various forms. And what did you think about that? [laughing]

**Arwel**

Yeah, I got into trouble with it.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Arwel**

The elephants were literally, they're quite cool, quite cool, decorating things, you know. So you get like a train of elephants or whatever. So the elephants are always there. They weren't added because of "the elephant in the room." But then I did add some bits in other places, like the elephant glass in Sherrinford and stuff like that, just as a little visual gag and kind of nod to the people that were following the bits I was doing on Twitter, you know?

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Arwel**

But then I didn't, I didn't expect to be accused of queerbaiting by doing it, though.

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**Chase**

On behalf of those people, I'm sorry. *I* enjoyed the elephants.

**Arwel**

I thought it was cool. And it was kind of, you know, it was nice to do, to have a little interaction with some fans and stuff. That's the only reason really.

**B**

So it was really exciting when you got the Emmy nomination for *Scandal* in Belgravia. Can you tell us about the really iconic bed scene in that episode?

**Arwel**

Yeah, that was very unexpected. What was really strange was that, just a quick segue, we were in the early days of prep on... was it *Scandal* I got nominated for? I can't remember. I thought we were in prep on that series and I got nominated previously.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Arwel**

But um, yeah, so, Paul McGuigan, actually, we were in prep, we were picking Paul McGuigan up from his hotel, and he came and as he got in the car, he said, "Congratulations." And I said, "What for?" He said, "Oh, you're nominated for an Emmy."

**B**

Surprise! Yeah.

**Arwel**

Yeah. Yeah, so the bed scene was kind of cool because it was... Some of the best stuff we've done on *Sherlock* over the years has been working together with Danny [Hargreaves] in SFX, doing stuff. There were various elements we did in that, in the field in Brecon Beacons in Wales, where I recreated the wall and the fireplace and everything and had brought in on a big telescopic four wheel drive machine into the field so we could lift it in and out and move it behind him. But also got the bed, and Danny had a hydraulic lift on it, so it literally, he could just make it do... [hand motion of the bed rising] so it could just come up like that. But the transition, that's the one that really got me because they obviously, they're mixing overlay on the day, then when we were in the bedroom, doing the second half of it and got



the twist on the bed cover bang on. And you, even I can't tell where, at what point they go from one to the other. It's very well done.

**B**

Yeah. It's great detail.

### **Sunday Duck**

So if season five was to happen... [laughter] We can all dream. How feasible would it be to construct any given set? Especially 221B.

### **Arwel**

The main set is still in storage. So it's still there. Because, more than anything, Hartswood, I think, would never get rid of it to be honest, but... Funnily enough, your background, Sunday, as you were asking the question, is the most difficult part because that wallpaper is a heritage period wallpaper that I bought all the rolls for. And it was like 24 rolls, thinking that's more than enough, but because we've done four series and rebuilt it in total, I think five times? I've used all of it. There isn't a whole roll left. There's little bits left. So we were very very careful taking it apart last time, but if any damage happens to that wall, it will be a nightmare, because it's textured paper and it has gold. So it's not something you can print. It doesn't work. I did, for the original Sherlocked, for the panels on the stage, they wanted a mini 221B background and I photographed it, then printed wallpaper for them for that. And it's fine for a con or something like that, but it would never stand up on camera. So that would be my first concern, I think, if it goes ever again. How the hell do we do that? I think we'd probably have to patch it up and hand paint it.

### **Science**

Oh, man.

**B**

Just have them write, like, they're doing a little DIY and they change the wallpaper. That's all.

### **Arwel**

Yeah, I offered that, when we, after it was blown up, but they were really adamant that it had to be exactly the same.

**B**

Oh gosh. [laughter]

**Arwel**

You know, the painter and decorator that was in the scene knew what he was doing, didn't he?

**B**

[laughter]

**Fin Amour**

So it has been awesome speaking with you. We're about to wrap this up. But we just wanted to ask a couple of things about how things have been going since the lockdown started. First of all, were you working on anything when this all came about? And if so, what's going to happen to that project?

**Arwel**

I was doing some early prep on a couple of things, and we don't know what's going to happen to them at the moment. They will probably go, but not til later. Whether it's later this year or next year, I don't know. There's a lot of interesting chats and discussions going on about how people go back to work and keep social distancing and safety. And you know, I can see us building more sets, because we do go to locations a lot. But I don't see anyone wanting 60 to 70 people traipsing through their homes anymore. Which is the amount, you know, by the time you've got cast and crew, that's the amount of people you're talking about having there. So I think controlled environments and studios are going to be way more in vogue, or actually necessary. So yeah, it's gonna be interesting to see really how all this pans out and what it does to us. You know, I don't think it will impact how it... well, it might impact how I do my job, but the job is the job. It depends what you do, but it might impact the filming more so, and even things, little things like number of actors in a scene, you know, the minimum. They'll keep it to a minimum as much as possible. So yeah, it'll be interesting. Strange times, right? But I've kept myself busy. I've built myself a little man cave in the garden, which is where those pictures of the smiley face and stuff, I've been posting it from. So I've been decorating with bits and bobs I had in my garage, like the Baker Street sign and stuff, you know? It's been quite nice.

**Sunday Duck**

You know, it's interesting. Davey Nellist said the same thing to us, that he put up a man cave in his garage.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Arwel**

It's an opportunity to, you know, there's a corner of my garden where I built a pirate ship for my son when he was younger. And that had gone, so there was a gap there. And so I thought, well, I'll do something while I have time now.

**B**

Have you seen the, there's the viral video going around where the stunt coordinators have like all banded together and they're like--

**Arwel**

And punched, punched and kicked each other? Yeah.

**B**

Like is there a production designer equivalent that you can maybe do like that?

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Arwel**

Where we're all flouncing about and covered with swathes of wallpaper and fabric or something?

**B**

Yeah, put a couple of things together.

**Arwel**

I don't think you would have the same impact so much.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**B**

It's creative. Creative people.

**Arwel**

Yeah. No, we tend not to tweet to each other really, that much!

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

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**Arwel**

There's a couple that I know because I've worked with them. But generally, yeah, no, I don't know many of the designers really.

**Science**

Interesting.

**B**

Well, our final question for this is, has there been any kind of silver linings coming out of this whole isolation pandemic for you? Like, have you worked on any personal projects besides your man cave? That you just mentioned.

**Arwel**

Well, yeah, that was my big project that kept myself busy and kept myself from climbing the walls. I've spent a bit more time with the family, which is always nice. But yeah, so, I've just been more aware of how lucky I am of where I live, really, I think, because I've got a nice garden and I'm able to have some time outside and do stuff. I think it's very tough for people who live in small apartments and have, you know...I read a great scathing rant by someone that lived in an apartment in New York that was ranting about people complaining about the lawn comment and saying, you should try living in apartments where the kitchen is designed just to make noodles.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Chase**

Yep, that's often a thought I have is, everybody is like sitting in their backyards and I'm like, enjoy it. I have one room.

**Science**

Oh man.

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Fox**

Well, thank you so much for joining us.

**Arwel**

My pleasure.

**Fox**

Please say hello and thank you to the amazing Claire Pritchard, who's been engaging with fans, and for being super generous yourself with fans on Instagram and Twitter and posting all the images that you've been posting.

**Arwel**

Yeah. I'm struggling to find the original content now though!

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter]

**Science**

Well, you know us. We'll take anything.

**Arwel**

Yeah, recently someone was saying something about, that I'd repeated myself and I went and counted. I think I've done something like 400 images, I think, over the last few weeks, so yeah. It's not bad, is it?

**Multiple speakers**

[laughter and overlapping comments]

**Fox**

Well, thank you!

**Arwel**

My pleasure. Thank you very much.

**Multiple speakers**

[overlapping thank yous]

**Science**

We really appreciate it.

**Arwel**

Bye!

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## **Multiple speakers**

[Overlapping byes and thank yous]

*(Music outro)*

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## **Transcription Team**

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>, produced and edited by Emma Grant. Betaed by Caroline.

## **Contact**

Other consulting fans are encouraged to contribute to the discussion by posting comments on our various social media outlets, sending email, or leaving voicemail. Here's where you can reach us:

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## **Music**

**Arwel Wyn Jones Q&A** – Manic Street Preachers, National Treasure – The Complete Singles: A Design for Life

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