

ALAN CUMMING IS BRUNO THE BEAR



Scots actor Alan Cumming may have been catapulted from Carnoustie to superstardom but he is not a man to be typecast.

The smooth star of *Xmen 2*, *GoldenEye* and *Josie and the Pussycats*, now has his pick of roles in Hollywood but he told BBC Scotland bosses he was happy to provide the voice of bumbling Bruno the Bear, simply because he liked what he saw of the script and their passion for the project.

Alan, who has been in Australia filming *Son of the Mask*, says: "I love stories where seemingly normal things turn fantastico. It's also nice that a girl is the main character. Most of all, I was excited by the people making the show and their enthusiasm about it."

Alan's animated character in the series, Bruno, is a well-meaning, if bumbling bear. Unlike his fellow Shoebox Zoo inhabitants he is desperate to get to grips with the 21st century.

In direct contrast to Edwin the Eagle, who is bamboozled by technology, Bruno has an innate curiosity that means he can't pass a button without pushing it... even if it is on a washing machine with Wolfgang inside.

"I loved Bruno," he raves. "He is a little dim, but has a good heart. You can't help liking him. Maybe it's because he's so dim, but he never gives up or gets too disheartened and he is also full of surprises."

Perthshire-born Alan, who now has homes in London and Los Angeles, spent a few days last summer recording the voice of Bruno the Bear. The recording sessions heralded a welcome reunion for Alan and old friend and fellow Scot, Siobhan Redmond.

"Siobhan was in the very first play I ever did as a professional actor," explains Alan, who graduated from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow in 1985.



"It was *Macbeth*, she was Lady Macduff and I was Malcolm. We also did a new play, *Macbeth Possessed*, at the same time and during one performance Siobhan laughed in her own death scene. That's when I knew I liked her.

"The recording sessions were a relaxed affair because everyone involved knew each other. I had made a film with Rik about 10 years ago," Alan explains. "It was one of his Rik Mayall series, called *Micky Love*. Simon, I had met, but not worked with."

Alan is no stranger to playing the voice of an animated character.

"I was the voice of *Black Beauty* in the movie *Black Beauty* a few years ago. I also play the devil in an animated series in America called *The God, the Devil and Bob*.

"I've also done a few films where there's been CGI stuff like the *Spy Kids* films and *X-Men United* and was also in the *Flintstones* in *Viva Rock Vegas*. In that, I was dangled on wires and had to do lines with paper plates that had 'Fred' and 'Barney' written on them! I like doing animated shows," he adds, "because you don't have to look good in the mornings."