

SIOBHAN REDMOND IS AILSA THE ADDER



Acclaimed Scottish actress Siobhan Redmond is the s-s-silken voice behind Ailsa the Adder, the only female inhabitant of the Shoebox Zoo.

"I jumped at the chance to do it," laughs the Glasgow born star of *Holby City* and *Between the Lines*. "Not only is it a fantastic story, it gave me the chance to play my animal alter ego.

"Ailsa is a tremendous character and I've always wanted to play the voice of an animated animal. I get to do a lot of hissing – snakes make so many great noises!"

Siobhan spent three days in London in June 2003 recording the voice of Ailsa alongside Simon Callow, Rik Mayall and her old pal Alan Cumming, with whom she starred in the cult BBC sitcom about air stewards, *The High Life*, back in the 1980s.

"It was a fascinating experience," she says. "Your voice is being recorded but they also film what you look like when you are saying your lines, your facial expressions, how you move and so on.

"The four of us really only worked together on one day because Alan had so many commitments, it was great to see him again."



Siobhan, 44, has played a wide range of characters on stage, television and film, during her distinguished career. Just last year, she starred as Edinburgh icon, Miss Jean Brodie, in a critically acclaimed production of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* at Edinburgh's Royal Lyceum Theatre.

Her latest project is a sitcom for BBC called *The Smoking Room with Man about the House* actress Paula Wilcox and *Gosford Park* star Jeremy Swift.

Siobhan admits she took an instant shine to the character of Ailsa and couldn't believe how much she'd enjoyed doing the voice-over recording session.

"We all had great fun doing the recording. Simon, who plays Wolfgang, turned out to be a great howler and after one particularly brilliant howl, we all stopped to give him a round of applause.

"But I really like Ailsa," she says. "She doesn't trust anyone and she takes the temperature of every situation very astutely. She's smart and I like to play smart.

"I think CGI is a great idea because it can make you better-looking each time. Ailsa is tremendous looking!"



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