

# PATRICK MCGOOHAN

So popular were the adventures of the tough, rugged, debonair John Drake, Special Agent in the hit ATV series “Danger Man” that his many fans demanded he return to the screens again in a new series.

Drake is played by Patrick McGoochan, once described by an interviewer as being the “strong, silent type”. Pat is a man of few words, particularly when being interviewed. He hates it.

“I’m against any kind of invasion of my privacy,” he says. “Most people want to talk about one’s own personal and private life. They want to strip you of all your little secrets – find out the real you, as they say. Well, I understand they have a job to do, but I don’t see why I should fall ‘victim’ to their inquisitive questions when they don’t relate to my professional work. Anyone who wants to talk about me as an actor I’m only too happy to oblige.”

Strong words indeed, but then Pat is a man who speaks his mind.

He is also ruthlessly honest about his work. “I’ve made many films,” he says, “but most of them have been rubbish. I’ve rarely liked anything I’ve done, apart from my work as John Drake and two films I made for Walt Disney, *Dr Syn* and *The Three Lives of Thomasina*.”

Before accepting the role in the TV series, Pat was already well known for his work in the theatre and various film roles he had played.

When he announced he was going into a television series there were many who were surprised by his decision.

“I didn’t understand why they were surprised at that time,” he said. “I suppose in those days it was thought bad of an actor to desert films for television. But it didn’t worry me at all, even though to start with the Drake role meant I would be tied down for a year. I looked upon it as being just another job. Mind you, I was a little frightened at first.”

Asked why, he replied, “Well, it might have turned out to be terrible and trashy – and this always worries me. But it hasn’t. I must say I have enjoyed every minute of it. Mind you, there have been the odd episodes that haven’t been too good, and I squirm when I watch them, but on the whole we’ve set a pretty high standard, and this pleases me.”

Drake has been described by the script-writers as “a man of ideals, with a passionate belief in the dignity of mankind, risking his life in the cause of international peace and understanding.”

Says Pat, “I’d say Drake is a man who has seen a lot of the world and has studied people and reached the stage of wanting to do something exciting, but also something that will do good.”

At first, when he accepted the role, Pat wanted to make various changes in the character of John Drake. “I didn’t like the way the man came over when I started to read the scripts,” he said. “He was painted as a rough, tough, sexy guy, who hit below the belt in his fights, was always using a gun, and making passes at pretty girls. I didn’t like this conception of Drake. I wanted to change him, and I had a fight in getting my own way, but other people saw Drake as I did and so the change was made. Personally I hate violence. If Drake fights, then he has

to fight clean. He will only use a gun in a desperate situation. And as for women – well, I didn't want Drake to get too involved. He was a man who had to have complete freedom – freedom from any domestic situations.”

And so the character of John Drake was born. Within a short time after it had first been seen on our screens, “Danger Man” became a hit. It's been this way ever since.

Pat was born in New York in 1928, the son of a farmer. After a few years in Ireland he came to live in England. That was in 1937. At 20 he joined the Sheffield Repertory Company, after deciding he wanted to make acting his career. Before this he had worked in a bank, had been a chicken-farmer and driven a truck.

He spent four years with the Sheffield company and then joined other companies. His first West End starring role came with a part in “Serious Charge”. His first film was *High Tide at Noon*. He was then signed to a Rank contract, but hated being under contract. Numerous films and television plays followed. His most successful TV acting role came with “Brand” and “First Man on the Moon”, which both brought him awards.

He is married to Joan Drummond and has three daughters.