

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

Boyd Hilton: Hello everyone. I'm Boyd Hilton, thanks very much for coming to this very special Life in Pictures event. We've got one of the most iconic actors of our time here today who's made some of the grittiest, most interesting films of recent years and worked with some of the greatest directors and greatest actors. Just to remind you of the greatness of the man, let's have a look at some of his work.

[Clip plays]

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Ray Winstone. Thank you, thanks for coming on a Sunday, and not only on a Sunday, but also West Ham are about to kick off as well.

Ray Winstone: I know, it's a right liberty really. Haven't you got nothing better to do? Thank you for coming, thank you.

BH: They're looking forward to it. Let's go way back to the early days and a couple of things I wanted to ask you about. You've written this book called *Young Winstone*, which you talk about particularly the importance of boxing early on, the Repton Boxing Club, this legendary place, and the fact that boxing gave you confidence and kind of walking on into the ring and all of that, kind of helped you a lot in the early days of performing and becoming an actor. Is that right?

RW: Yeah I think more than anything, as you probably know my classical training wasn't all that. And I think there was a confidence thing with me as well, and a respect thing; respect not only for the people that you're gonna work with and your opponent if you like in the boxing sense, but for yourself. I think I learnt that through boxing, and I think I've taken, obviously not throwing punches and things like that, but I've taken that into my working life you know.

BH: And a lot of your friends at the time when you were young worked during the Anna Scher Theatre, didn't they?

RW: Yeah, I didn't actually know them before I became an actor, like people like Phil Daniels, Peter-Hugo Daly and Pauline Quirke, they were really ahead

of me, of what I was doing. Because you've got to remember, it was kind of people like Albert Finney and Michael Caine and Tom Courtenay, and you know those kind of films that Carol Reed was making back in the day, that all of a sudden there was, you got the impression that, it wasn't the fantasy characters any more who you was looking at, it was a slice of real life, and that maybe someone who came from Plaistow or came from Coventry or Liverpool, maybe had a place in this industry you know. It still took me a long while to realise that, even after I'd done *Scum* I just thought it was a bit of a laugh, you know I thought it was, it was you know, "oh, I've made a film and all of a sudden it's at the pictures and oh well that's it now innit, I've done it," you know. That kind of, I didn't really know what it was, I didn't know what the arts were or what the fact of making a movie meant you know really, it was just a bit of a laugh.

BH: But you did go and see a lot of films didn't you? Your dad took you to see films?

RW: I went and saw more films than than I do now. The trouble with being an actor and making movies a bit, you know how they're made. And it really, I don't know what it is with me, I start watching films now unless they're really something special, and it gives me the hump. I get the hump with myself because I know, "oh I know how that's shot that bit." You know it's like, I remember seeing *The Omen*, the first one which is a great film actually, Gregory Peck you know and...

BH: David Warner.

RW: Yeah. And the scene where she falls off the balcony and she's spinning you know, and I know how it was done, and it kind of killed it for me you know.

BH: Was there one film or one actor or something that inspired you, that you thought oh yeah, when you were a kid and you went to the movies and you thought, that's the kind of thing, I want to do that.

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
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RW: It was Albert Finney, I loved Albert Finney. Michael Caine as well, you know all those kind of actors, Richard Harris, you know they were kind of real, they were gritty you know. I remember, I was lucky, when I was at drama school for a year, I got a job at the National Theatre, so I was a National Theatre player. I actually was working in the wardrobe department.

BH: That's unlikely isn't it?

RW: Very unlikely. I think I was the only straight one in there. And my job, a mate of mine was actually looking after Albert Finney and he became ill, John, and I took over looking after Albert Finney who was, you know blinding, he was a proper geezer you know. And he was doing *Hamlet* at the time, and I used to sit and watch him do *Hamlet* and you know he made it real. You know I'd see wahaa, all this going on, all this palaver, and Albert Finney you know just actually made you wanna do Shakespeare, and you understood it. You know it was, you got his emotions, you know which was the most important thing. It wasn't just concentrating on the words, it was concentrating on what was going on in here and up here. And yeah, and Albert, I remember I made him late on stage one night, and I was down and Susan Fleetwood had come in who was playing one of the parts, I can't remember what the part was now. And she said, "feel my heart," and she lifted her tit up and put my hand on her tit, and it was beating, and I said, "yeah, it feels lovely Susan. Fantastic." And Albert came running off and he was doing the mad scene and I said, "how's it going Albert?" He said, "Yeah, it's going really well," and he started talking to me, and he missed his cue in Shakespeare, and I thought, "you know what, I better get out of here." So I had it on my toes. And at the time it was the Old Vic and it was next door where the bar was, and I was in there having a drink and Albert came in. And I see him come in and I ducked down, and I crawled between all the stalls, and I see him go that way, and I thought, "I'm out of here." And I got to the end and I came up and he was standing there, I don't know how he'd done it. And he called me a see you next Tuesday, and then he bought me a

drink and it was alright. But he was, he was one of my, one of my early days, *Saturday Night Sunday Morning* you know, and I watched him ever since and I believe him with whatever he does. But there was a few others about at the time. There was, I used to love John Wayne you know. And I think he was, everyone looked at him as a cowboy and that, but you know in the film *The Searchers*, which is not just the way it was beautifully shot and all that, it was, John Wayne's playing a bigot, there's more to the story than that, you know and it was, he had a way of playing emotion I think John Wayne, and I don't think he ever really got the credit he deserved for that you know.

BH: I guess the thing that we all saw you in first, *Scum*, followed soon by *Quadrophenia*, what was the key to getting that role in *Scum*, do you remember?

RW: The way I walked down the corridor, nothing to do with acting at all. It wasn't, and that's what Alan Clarke told me as well. And I had no idea about the technique of acting you know, and it's something, it's funny because when you don't think about the camera you just do the natural things. And Clarkey taught me, which stood me in good stead for a long while but actually kind of put me back a little bit I think, because I took everything literally as you feel it you know, and as I think it doesn't always come off, you know you're crap at it sometimes and you're trying to play everything with an honesty and a truth, but there's different genres of film I guess where you need to have something a little bit more special than that you know, and I didn't have that. And sometimes I still haven't got that, I find it very difficult to find you know. But literally Alan said to me it was the way you, because it was written for a Glaswegian anyway, and I don't know if you've heard my Scottish accent but it's not very good. So and he, literally I was the last one in to see him, and he came out with me and he watched me walk down the corridor, and I walked like a boxer, like a fighter you know, and that's how I got the part. But it's what he taught me while we were doing the film, he was a great, great teacher. Not just with me, I think

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

with a lot of other actors he's worked with as well. I'd say Phil Daniels, you all the way through you know, and Gary Oldman, Gary worked with him as well you know and took a hell of a lot from Clarke.

BH: In the book you say something about how after you did *Scum* and *Quadrophenia* and a lot of the TV work we enjoyed you in in the 80s, you weren't happy with the performance you gave, or at least you couldn't sit there and go, "I'm happy with that," until *Nil By Mouth* all those years later, is that right?

RW: Yeah, I think so. I guess that goes for every actor though. I think if you're ever satisfied with what you do then you know, there's something wrong with you. For me *Nil By Mouth*, Gary again is a great teacher you know, I'd go as far to say he's the best, for an actor, I'm not talking about filming and things, but for an actor the best director I've ever worked with, yeah.

BH: And did that come about through your friendship with Kathy Burke who's in it as well?

RW: No, not at all. That came about because, he was aware of what I was doing, and I wasn't doing much, but he wrote the character for me, which is very flattering you know when you get someone of that talent who actually feels that you're capable of going on and being a lead in his movie you know, which is a big step for him as well. So he let me go, he let me off the leash I think. Because I've got my own ideas what I think it's about, which I can't, it's very difficult to express you know. But to actually play a character you know you don't have to walk around, I don't anyway, have to walk around and take that home with me and, you know, live that life. Some actors do and it works for them, I've got nothing against that. For me it was, I was just calm, I just felt free, I felt I was let off the leash to really express what I thought it was all about.

BH: Well we've got a clip which I think shows that very much, from *Nil By Mouth*. I just must mention, in case you are of a nervous disposition, there's a huge

amount of language in this as there are in many of the clips we're going to show.

RW: Oh is there?

BH: Yeah, but you know, if you haven't seen *Nil By Mouth* then you need to know that, but obviously you probably have and you know there is language in it, but let's take a look at this brilliant clip.

[Clip from *Nil By Mouth*]

In that clip does look like you're kind of improvising and just kind of doing your thing around the character, around that scene, is that how it worked?

RW: Most of it was written, and we bring stories to it you know, stories that you know, stories that you see. We played with alcohol you know, and I spoke to Gary, I said, "listen, you know, it's to do with the eyes Gary." You know, your eyes go in a funny way and, because what we used to do on *Nil By Mouth*, we used to just have a little taster in the morning when we got to work. We used to get an old beer and roll it around the mouth, and spit it out, you had that taste of alcohol in your mouth you know. But for these scenes we sat down, I said, "now look, are you going to look after me because I'm gonna get on it, and I'm going to just tell the story you know." I remember my dad at home, God bless him, terrible on whiskey, didn't like Scotch you know, but he loved the taste, but he used to talk to the ceiling you know. And like, "you want a table? I'll buy you a table, I'll fucking buy a..." And that's where it came from really. The violence didn't come from that you know, but it was my dad on whiskey. On anything else he was fantastic; cuddle you, love you to death you know, but on a whiskey... And I think I'm a bit like that myself, I mean whiskey to me is like, I mean someone could say hello and I'm like, "what?" You know you want a rest so you stay away from them things. So we played with it, and Gary looked on and he'd sit me down and he'd talk to me and I'd be just rambling on. It's a funny old place, you can't get too pissed, if you get too pissed then you're out of control. But you just get to a level, whether that's right or wrong or not, I don't know whether that's called acting.

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

Acting is probably, but we're doing cinema and it's you know, we're making a film that's about life. You know, we're not doing a car chase movie, we're doing a film about people's lives and you have a responsibility, I feel you have a responsibility to that you know, showing people with an illness, and I feel you have to be naked and I think you have to open up, and I think you have to project that onto a film.

BH: I was going to say, because you do see some terrible drunk acting don't you, so maybe it does help.

RW: Yeah, because there's laws and there's rules on set much more now to be honest, you know it's a dangerous thing to have you know. Have you ever seen an actor out of control? It can be fucking scary I tell you, that's when they'll just go over the top. But you know there is laws and there's rules, and quite rightly so, but I mean, if you're making a film about that then you know you go at it, you've got to. I remember seeing one of my favourite actors, Martin Sheen, in *Apocalypse Now*, and the early scene is where he's out of his nut laying on the bed and I think he's naked...

BH: And he cuts himself, and he really did cut himself.

RW: Yeah but you see him naked, but when he jumps across the bed he covered his bollocks up, so he couldn't have been that drunk. Because when you're drunk you go, "have a look at that." You know what I mean? So there is an inhibition that you can get rid of in a way. I don't say that's the way to go because there's some people that can do it fantastically without doing that. But there's something about your eyes, and I think it's a freedom of just getting that fucking anger and that thing. And I had you know, God I had some people in that film to work with as well, you know Kathy Burke and little Charlie Creed-Miles who's really a fantastic young actor, well he ain't young anymore but he was then. But you know we had that on that, and everyone was on the same page. And it's to do with Gary, you know we rehearsed the whole thing, we went through the whole thing before we even started filming. And he had a little

camera, Gary – "Raymond, move that way" – and he had this little camera he'd follow you about with. And he'd say about crossing the line, "I want to cross the line you know, I want to get that jump, make them feel uncomfortable you know."

BH: And the end result clearly was worth it. It was an incredible powerful film, you got a BAFTA nomination. I was going to ask you, when you're doing that kind of film, which was such a special thing to watch when it came out and everyone was bowled over by it, when you were making it you kind of knew this was a special thing?

RW: Well you did, but even though I'd, I didn't particularly want to be an actor when I done *Scum*, and you kind of think you know, this has got something to say. And I really feel more comfortable on films that have got something to say. And I know that sounds really arty that dunnit, it really does. But I feel really comfortable when I'm in a film like *The War Zone* or *Nil By Mouth*.

BH: Well let's talk about *The War Zone*, yeah.

RW: Not comfortable with the way I'm making them, but the fact you're actually, you're trying to educate in a way, and I feel quite good about that you know.

BH: I was going to ask about that, so *The War Zone* also made by a great actor, Tim Roth.

RW: Yeah, absolutely.

BH: Also incredible, Tilda Swinton playing your wife, fantastic. And also even more, after *Nil By Mouth*, really even more grueling and kind of hardcore look at a family gone completely wrong, and particularly your character completely horrendous stuff he does. And you've said you don't take stuff home, emotionally, but even in that kind of film?

RW: No, this is one, this film made me have to actually think about *Nil By Mouth* actually a bit more. And I've said it before but *Nil By Mouth* you know I could go home at night, get into bed, lovely,

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

have a cup of tea in the morning with breakfast, you know do all the normal things in life, go to work. And it's a film about abuse, abuse, abusing yourself, you're abusing your wife, you're abusing your family. And when I done *The War Zone*, I was fine you know, because *The War Zone*, very different from *Nil By Mouth*. There's a lot of the stories in *The War Zone* are my stories, about the car crash and all that you know, we just talked. I'm not saying we improvised them but we improvised them before we actually shot, and then they were written down and we made the movie like that you know. And I was great until I got to the scene where I've got to, I've got to rape my daughter. And the little girl I'd fallen in love with, this little Lara who's a friend of my daughter's, which is really freaky you know, anyway and I've got to rape her in this bunker, and I couldn't do it. I went, "what the fuck am I doing here in this movie, what are we making this for?" And my bottle completely and utterly went, and I'm having a go at Tim, I said, "there's something wrong with you, you know. You're fucking making films like this, what do you call this?" And I became my dad for a minute you know, "you call this entertainment? This ain't fucking entertainment." I went right kind of like a film critic for a minute. And it was Lara, and the crew on that film were absolutely marvelous, everyone was bang on that movie for a reason you know. And little Lara, she said, "listen, we're making a film, we're making something very good here, you know, and I'm glad it's you that I'm working with, I feel alright. So you know, like grow up, you know." And I'm like, "alright babe, alright." And she got me, she got me going, and you know and we done that thing. But what it made me have to do is, I had to go back and look at *Nil By Mouth* then because if that kind of abuse really hurt me, as you know of course it will, you're dealing with kids you know, paedophiles, it's the scariest thing in the world if you're a father or you're a mother you know. But then again, I thought, well you know I was alright about bashing Kathy up and getting on the piss and taking drugs in *Nil By Mouth*, oh that's alright you know. And I really had to sit down and have a little chat with myself about that, you know.

BH: Okay, let's have a look, we've got a clip of *The War Zone*.

RW: I hope it ain't the bunker scene or I'm going home.

BH: No, no, this is an interesting clip.

[Clip from *The War Zone*]

I watched it again recently, I think it's still one of the most uncompromising films about child abuse, like you're talking about, that there's ever been. I mean it's incredible. You must be proud of having gone through that grueling experience of having to do particularly that scene, those scenes, but the end result is so powerful.

RW: Absolutely, I'm really proud of that film. We had to stop, me and Tim were going round doing questions and answers and things like this after the movie you know, in Salt Lake City, strange gaffe I've got to tell you, and you know Edinburgh, just all over the place. And I said, "I've really got to stop doing this," because you start listening to the questions and you can tell who's a wrong'un. You start to really, you kind of, or you think you know, you know, and it really starts to affect you. And what more can you do you know? And as we've seen it's like a tip of an iceberg you know.

BH: Absolutely yeah.

RW: It is.

BH: It seems prescient doesn't it because then, even then...

RW: I mean this was made, how long ago was this made?

BH: 1999, so yeah.

RW: I mean that's 16 years, 15 years ago, and you know we weren't hearing about all this you know.

BH: The next film that I think kind of really hit home, and almost had as big an effect, certainly as far as us watching you in your career, I don't know about your career in general, was *Sexy Beast*,

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

which managed to be incredible fun to watch it, and to kind of say a lot. And incredible characters. I mean that whole experience watching it is fantastic and you can watch it again and again, and it's become a huge phenomenon, people love it. Was it as much fun making it?

RW: Yeah. No it was, it was, you know eight weeks we was on a beach near Almeria in Spain, in this little village on the beach, you know in a national park. And I got there two weeks early, I said, "what do you want me here two weeks early for, what are we doing?" They said, "we just want you to eat as much pasta and drink as much vodka as you want." Beautiful, okay. And lay in the sun you know, get brown and all that, I had me speedos on.

BH: You spend much of the film in your speedos, I was going to say.

RW: I was like a proper Italiano I was, yeah. And it was, that was great, and it was with a great bunch of people actually working. I really rate the writers anyway you know, the two boys they wrote *44 Inch Chest* as well. But Amanda Redman I think is one of our best actresses from this country, to work with her was a pleasure. I'm working with her again now, so I've got to say that, but she is, she's fantastic. And Cavan Kendall, who passed away sadly before the film came out, who plays my mate in it. And Julianne White. And just we were like a little mob on the Costa Brava you know.

BH: And Ben Kingsley of course, famously...

RW: Well I was coming to him, Benny.

BH: I'm sorry, I'll let you get to him.

RW: And Benny you know, he turned up, he was late getting in and it kind of worked with the movie because we were waiting for Don. And he was on another film and they couldn't release him because the film got pushed back and that, so we were working round all that. Don comes, "oh when's he coming, is he ever gonna be fucking here or..." And then he finally turned up, and he'd

been working don't forget on another movie, and he's turned up and we've had a little party for him when he's turning up that night and it's all going off and the music's playing and that. And he walks in and he started talking like a Londoner right, Ben. And I thought, "what's he doing? What's he talking like that for? He don't talk like that. He's posh." And so I climbed out the window, as he was talking to me I just climbed out the window as if to say, "shut up, Ben, alright." And he just turned into this incredible Don Logan. Because originally I was offered the part of Don Logan, and I said, "I want to play Gary. Please let me play Gary, I know, I don't wanna do a villain." Because I'd have played him with Tourette's, because not a word in that script was changed. I've got to tell you know, because the writing was so good, if you'd changed a little thing in that script it threw the rest of it out. So I'd have had him with Tourette's, a bit like that Don, and I'm glad I never done it right because this genius come along, and he is Ben, he's blinding, and I love, absolutely love working with him. It was you know, we were on the same page. And with a geezer who played Gandhi you know, I've got Gandhi beating me up. But he, you know he was just an absolute joy to work with, I've got to tell you now.

BH: It did feel like watching it that a lot, a lot of the stuff between you and him was you letting him kind of go crazy, and like you gave him the space almost.

RW: Well I'd kind of learnt by then that's that what acting was you know. And yeah, I mean you've got this little guy, you know with his sleeves rolled up, who's your worst nightmare, I've got to tell you. Them people who when you say, "how you been?" "What do you mean how've I been." "Well, you're looking well." "Am I?" You know there's no, they answer a question with a question, you're like fucking hell, and you want to kill them you know. And that's what he was like, you know the Don's like that. "Do you wanna have a look around Don?" "Yeah, I'll have a look in a minute when I have a piss." And you're like, oh nice. But this is his character, he just, and he don't come from there, but he's got it to a tee, and

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

it's the easiest thing in the world just to, you know, to play with him.

BH: Let's remind ourselves of the brilliance of *Sexy Beast* with this clip.

RW: Oh, it's a great film, I love this film.

[Clip from *Sexy Beast*]

BH: We should also mention Jonathan Glazer the director, I mean incredible work. I mean he's kind of considered a maverick figure, what was he like for you to work with?

RW: Well it was his first film, Jon, he'd come straight from commercials. And I think I've worked with about 15 to 20 first-time directors over the years, and I quite like that, because they come with no baggage in a way, they invent because they don't know the rules, you know. And I've actually, most of them I've really enjoyed working with you know, because it's a bit like get stuck in there when you go to work. Jonny was the same, but see Jon likes, you know I haven't seen him for a few years, but Jon likes to be there from the beginning. He likes to put the whole package together and make the movie you know, instead of you know going to a studio and being given a film and then has no say on the film. So that's why he makes very few films, it's not that he's not working on them, he just likes to make the films he wants to make, and that's the perfect world innit you know. I wish we could all kind of do that, after seeing some of mine.

BH: When you made it, when you first saw it back, I mean because it's a film that looks incredible, it's kind of got that incredible atmosphere as well having those performances and that story. When you first watched that film back do you remember what how you felt? Did you think, "oh God, this is kind of..."

RW: Well I remember one of the producers coming up to me while we was making it and saying, "err Ray." I went, "oh hello, how are you, yeah yeah good." "We're not sure what you're doing. We're not sure what you're actually trying to achieve on this film." I went, "oh right, oh. What you mean you

think I'm doing it wrong like?" They said, "well yeah." I went, "oh, okay. What are you watching it on?" And I think it was the old Avids at the time, I think they was still about before all the computer stuff and that. I said, "we're making an anamorphic film," I know enough about the game at this time, "it's a big screen innit?" I said, "well go and fucking watch it on that, and then tell me that I don't know what I'm doing." Because maybe I was wrong, you don't, you need to know early doors because then you can put it right hopefully, and they came back and they said it was alright, so. But you know it's a bit of a worry when your producer comes up. And it wasn't Jeremy Thomas, because Jeremy Thomas is a proper filmmaker you know.

BH: But you're absolutely right yeah, it's a huge, big widescreen kind of big, bold film isn't it, that's the great thing about it.

RW: Yeah, but then again I, I am guilty of sort of underplaying it sometimes. I think you know, I get caught up sometimes with that sort of you know, still is better you know, just look and let the music do it for you, you're unlucky because there's no music on at the time.

BH: A couple of years later you made a very different, a very contrasting, film *Last Orders*. But what a cast: Tom Courtenay, David Hemmings, Bob Hoskins, Helen Mirren, and you, playing Michael Caine's son. What a brilliant...

RW: Yeah, he was gutted Michael.

BH: Was he?

RW: He said, "can't you get anyone better looking?"

BH: With that kind of project is it difficult to kind of, I mean, I just imagine what a brilliant opportunity to just kind of hang out with those people and to act with them.

RW: No some of my best moments were when we were sitting in the car. There was me, Bob Hoskins, Tom Courtenay and David Hemmings, and me and David Hemmings and Tom, we'd become really good friends actually. And so there's five of us in the car and

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

Michael's in the ashtray. But we used to talk, we used to have great chats and it was nothing to do with film business, just about life and what they used to do when they was kids and all that you know. And remembering Margate, because we was supposed to be travelling, we did, we done the journey to Margate you know, and I remember going hopping with my aunties and all that, and that was called a holiday when you was a kid, don't know how. And then you know Michael would come up with a story, or mostly it was Bob, Bob would as well. And we had, that was tremendous times because you had Fred Schepisi, director, Australian Fred, who's a terrific man as well. It was a proper geezer film. But then you had Helen who'd you know tough as old boots as well, she don't take no bollocks from no one you know, and it was, it had a great atmosphere to it you know. And it had an old-fashioned feel to it, it reminded me of when I was a kid and the respect you had for your uncles and your mum and dad and all that kind of stuff you know.

BH: Let's remind ourselves, I think we've got a clip here of *Last Orders*.

[Clip from *Last Orders*]

RW: He said to me Michael, that was the first day's shoot with me you know, and he said, "hello Raymond." He said, "I know you're very nervous to be working with me, but don't worry son I'll look after you."

BH: You talked about being on the same wavelength as other actors and how sometimes you're immediately on the same wavelength. Does it take time sometimes to get?

RW: Sometimes it does yeah. Sometimes you don't have the chance to rehearse and all that, and sometimes you can be very lucky if the film works you know, it just sort of gels together and other times it doesn't you know. Most important time for me sometimes, especially on *Nil By Mouth* and *War Zone* and that, was the rehearsal period, even if you're not doing the lines but you're just together talking about it, so when you do end up

at work you're actually more or less all on the same page you know.

BH: And on a film like that where pretty much every cast member is a kind of huge giant of acting pretty much, does that take time or was that pretty quick?

RW: Yeah, you know you try and contain yourself, but if you're gonna work with Michael Caine and Hoskins and David Hemmings and Tom Courtenay and Helen, you know it's still that little, you think corr you know. I mean when I got *Last Orders* I didn't know they were doing it, so every day was like you'd hear, "oh Bob Hoskins is doing it." "Oh blinding, the fella out of *Long Good Friday*, great." Then Michael Caine, you'd go, "oh," and then your bottle starts to twitch a bit. Oh, these are proper actors, these are real fine actors you know. And I think Bob Hoskins' performance in *Last Orders* was probably the one that really held the film together, for me. I think his performance in that is fantastic you know.

BH: We're going to move on to another film that you did, a kind of completely contrasting film as well. I want to talk to mention some of your TV work.

RW: You're not going through them all tonight?

BH: No, we've selected certain ones. No we'd be here all night obviously, which would be great but we won't go through every single one, no. But I wanted to mention some of your TV work. Like *Henry VIII*, you were very proud of. It was brilliant wasn't it?

RW: Oh I loved doing that, I loved being the King of England you know. No I really did you know, and it's funny because people from where I'm, you know Plaistow, West Ham or the East End, actually hated me being Henry.

BH: Did they?

RW: Yeah, it was really weird, it was strange that kind of inverted snobbery that I have you know in a way. You know, "he can't be the King of England, he come from Plaistow, how can you do that?" "Oh okay, alright, fine." But in fact

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

I got great letters from Cambridge and from Oxford about it you know, which were, kind of made it alright it a way. It's sad when your own don't like you doing it. I'm not saying them all, I mean they weren't throwing bricks through me windows and things like that, but you know you kind of got that kind of look of "how could he be the King of England," you know. And I remember going, when we went along for it, we spoke about voices and the sounds and you know would he be from Yorkshire, [adopts Yorkshire accent] and you know talking like that. And I thought, not really, that's the King of England innit you know being a Yorkshireman. I'm not saying that it wouldn't be alright, if there's anyone from Yorkshire here. But I said, "well his accent would have actually been Latin," he'd have spoke in Latin, I mean he was educated in Rome, you know, Henry VIII. And I thought, it's more about the sound really for me, because I'd have been struggling with a really posh accent anyway you know. So I just went for the sound, the deepness of a man you'd follow you know, and you'd want to follow someone who had a powerful voice you know. And I kind of looked at Burton and what he was doing, because I love Burton's voice, I wish I could speak like Burton, and I wish I could speak like Anthony Hopkins you know, but I can't, so you have to utilise what you've got. And so I just went really deep and I thought that it's a power, this man's a powerful man, this is a gangster, you know. It's sad because there's lots of bits, you know there's a bit where he's writing to Anne Boleyn and it all got a bit prissy and a bit lovely and a bit floaty, and you know the king's banged up in a castle because the Black Death's about and all this business, and you kind of think, "well where's his bird then? He'd have a bird wouldn't he?" And they said, "what?" I said, "he'd have three or four birds, he's the King of England for God's sake." "No but he's in love with Anne." "Yeah I know, but he's the King of England, right." And they weren't having none of it, they weren't having none of it you know. And then they made *The Tudors* which kind of put that down the toilet didn't it. Yeah you know he's the king, but they were right. I loved doing this two-parter and I really enjoyed playing

the King of England, and in fact for a while I thought I was.

BH: Fair enough, a lot of people still do. The next film we're going to talk about is *The Proposition*, which was also a period thing, but like an Australian Western.

RW: I loved this film.

BH: Did you love this film yeah? I mean it is a fantastic piece of work.

RW: I really, really enjoyed it. This is like an old *High Noon* or something like that. And I guess I'm a bit old-fashioned when it comes to films, but I enjoyed making this film. I loved Johnny Hillcoat and the actors had on this were fabulous actors. Again you know, Emily [Watson] you know, and Guy Pearce who's a terrific actor, Danny Huston...

BH: John Hurt.

RW: Johnny Hurt again, he keeps following me about.

BH: He does, yeah, that's true.

RW: But yeah, and to be stuck in a place the other side of the world where everyone sounded like me, it was like being at home but 14,000 miles away you know. And then going to the middle of the Outback with these old pubs and ranches and Aborigines, and I just felt really at home in this place you know. And I loved them.

BH: Well let's, well you can tell from I think this clip, let's have a look.

[Clip from *The Proposition*]

RW: Nick Cave wrote that, and you think you know, "oh it's a pop star writing the script," and you read it and you go, "that's fantastic." I loved it from the minute I read it. And you think, "yeah, but his second one won't be all that," and then I read *Death of a Ladies' Man*, which still hasn't been made yet, but this kid can write you know. And my kind of stuff that I wanna, I love to do, that you feel you can get your teeth into. They come along very far and few between you know, but when they do you really

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

wanna grab them by the balls and get on with it you know.

BH: It's the tone isn't it of that film that I think especially, it's got absolutely...

RW: Pace, yeah.

BH: The pace of it and the intensity of it, and you can see from the performances, there is a bit of understated work going on there leading to these outbursts of violence. Did the director kind of sit you all down and establish the tone?

RW: Yeah again we had that thing of having at least just three or four days when we got there of just going through it and talking about a pace. It's not necessarily just like reading the script out loud you know, you wanna hear that, but just sitting there and just finding that pace. And I think the Outback of Australia does that for you in a way anyway you know. The flies, they're real, you know that's... Johnny Hurt worked in one of those kind of cabins all day one day, and God knows how hot it was in there. He don't moan John, he just, you know he just cracks on. And it was unbearable in there you know, but you kind of do it, you get on with it because you're enjoying the script, you're enjoying the peace you know. I've been on jobs where you don't and you can't wait to go home to be frank, you know, but you're still lucky enough to be working in this game I guess, and sometimes it's your own fault you know, you haven't got it right or you haven't done your homework properly. But something like that you really wanna, you wanna go to work and enjoy it you know, and make a good film. Because the script warrants it, the director warrants it, you've got all the pieces of the puzzle there, now it's up to you to go and make that work you know.

BH: Absolutely yeah, well talking of which, as time goes on you're kind of working with more and more of the best directors and actors out there. *The Departed*, which it's actually one of my...

RW: Yeah, he's not bad.

BH: He's not bad is he, Martin Scorsese? You're working with Martin Scorsese, you're working with Jack Nicholson, Leo DiCaprio, all these people. I mean when you got that role, was it hard to get the role, was that, was he thinking of you all the time do you know?

RW: No, I actually went to see him, like a lot of other actors probably did at the time. He was in, he was staying in The Dorchester, he likes a nice hotel Marty, but it was on a Sunday like it is today, right. And that means roast beef and Yorkshire puddings you know. But it was a Sunday morning, so I thought, "I can get up the West End quick, see Marty and get home for Sunday dinner. Nice, I can do that." So as I'm going in, my mobile went and it was my mate Tony, and I went, "alright Tone." And the door opened and it was Martin Scorsese. I went, "err Tone, I'm just going in to meet Martin Scorsese," he went, "yeah right." And I went, "Martin, I'll just be a second." I went, "I am Tone, listen I don't like putting the phone down on you, but jog on." And I went in, and again I had this brown leather coat-jacket on, and went in with Marty and I was up to play one of the cops. A big part, it was a good part, and I'd read it, I'd obviously read the script and I'd got a bit of the hump about Mr. French in it. And I thought the only way you get to know Costello is by the closest person by him, and that's Mr. French, and he says nothing. That's how you get to know Costello you know. So we sat down and he went, "So kid, you know [mumbles impression]. What do you think of the character?" And I went, we spoke for, we had a chat for about 45 minutes and I'm starving you know, but we were having a great chat. And he, because he could talk about anything Scorsese, you know he's a really knowledgeable, lovely man and I really liked him you know. And he says, "so do you want to play this part?" I say "no." I said, "I'd like to play Mr. French." He said, "he doesn't say anything." I said, "but he will." And he said, "yeah." And I've said, I said, "because he's the only one who could tell you who Costello is, who he is. And you know the scenes with him and Costello, that's when you get to find out about Costello you know, who Jack's playing." And so he said, "right," and he wrote all this character

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

and he just let me make it up. And then we'd make it up and Jack would do something else and would make something else up, and that's how French come about really. And I like, I didn't want to play a cop anyway, I wanted to be the bad guy. You know I did to be honest with you, because all these films you know he makes about the wise guys, so I wanted to be a bad guy. Really I sort of maneuvered my way in there a little bit.

BH: Well thank God you did, and also we've got a clip here. This isn't a clip with you and Jack, but it is a clip where you are talking...

RW: I met a guy on that film, I've got to tell you, sorry to interrupt you, but Martin Sheen, and you know we spoke about Martin Sheen earlier but I've always loved Martin Sheen.

BH: Who did play one of the cops.

RW: Yeah he was one of the cops, and what a blinding man, what a lovely man. Good guy Martin Sheen.

BH: I bet. Well we'll talk about, and the rest of the cast, but let's have a look at this.

[Clip from *The Departed*]

Working with Martin Scorsese, I mean he is pretty much the best out there right, and does it feel like that when you're working with him? Is there something about the way he works that's special?

RW: He just makes you feel a part of making a film. You feel very easy about, even though you're not the lead or anything like, coming up with ideas you know. He doesn't use every idea you come up with, and he laughs. I got killed three different ways in that movie; one was the one I shot myself through the head, another one I died in the Scorsese pose with a camera above and all the blood coming out from below which I loved, and there was another one. But there was also the scene where I murder my wife, and in the kind of like, we were looking back, it's like a dream sequence, and I creep up behind her and I garrote her with the cheese wire. And I said, and

he's got the camera all set up, and I went, "Mart, I've had an idea. What if I come up behind her and hit her on the top of the head with a hammer." He went, "what?" I said, "so it's the same shot, you know you're behind her, she's there, and as she comes up I can hit her on the head with this hammer and it's the same thing because it's brutal, it's horrible." He went, "okay." So we got this hammer, and you're nowhere near her, the girl's there and just about timing you know. And I come up, crunch, and she went down, and he went, "oh my God," and we never used that one, it was just too much so we went back to the old garroting you know. But he just, getting back to your question, he just makes you feel like you can bring something to the table to make a movie. And as an actor you want to feel like part of making a movie, whether you're a lead, whether you're just a guy who's coming in to do a part, you wanna, you wanna feel comfortable about having a say you know about what you're gonna do. And it might be wrong, but as long as your director, the greatest directors I've worked with will allow you to do that, and I've worked with some really good ones like that. You know Marty's certainly one of them, Gary's one, Tim's one, but there's plenty more out there.

BH: Does he do, we've had David Fincher here a couple of weeks ago who's famous for doing like you know 70/80 takes, does...

RW: No I couldn't hack it, no no no. No that, it's like doing a play, and you know I love doing the theatre for two or three weeks, and then after that you feel you've got there, and I think it's a discipline that maybe I haven't got. I've done it you know, but 70 takes and they say well, "You know I'm trying to get you there, get you tired," and, "no I can do that, I can get tired. I can go out the night before and get pissed. Believe me I can get really, really fucking tired if you want me tired, alright, to do that. And that's fine with me you know, just tell me the night before and I'll be really tired, right." But you know it's called acting, and there is, you have to have that kind of feeling. If technical things go wrong, yeah sure, you have to go and do it

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

again, but just for the sake of an effect, what are you actually looking for?

BH: So Scorsese doesn't do that many takes, he just he kind of tries things out?

RW: No, yeah, he'll do his takes, I mean until he's got it, but nowhere near in the realms of 30 or 70 takes. I'm sure he has done, not when I've been there he ain't.

BH: And I have to ask you about working with Jack Nicholson. I mean I assume that Jack Nicholson's one of the kind of guys whose films you were watching you know when you were growing up?

RW: Yeah me and Jack didn't seem to get on too well.

BH: Didn't you?

RW: No, and you know by the end we was alright you know, but maybe he was going through a funny time, I don't know. But everyone else loves him to death you know, and I just wanted him to be a great guy and I just, we just didn't click I don't think. We did, on the film it works and all that you know. I'll probably meet him tomorrow and he'll be as good as gold you know, it happens sometimes you know.

BH: But Martin Sheen who is an absolute...

RW: Oh I loved him, you know he's just a gentleman, an absolute gent. But there was a lot of them like that on that film. There's some good guys out there, there's some good people out there you know.

BH: Do you watch those films back, when *The Departed* comes on TV do you watch it back, do you watch yourself?

RW: No, not really, no. I love watching the films once they're made, I think it's like being a painter you know in a way. You paint your picture, you wanna see the finished product don't you? You wanna see if you've done alright or if you know, maybe you weren't so good in it and you go, oh. But I think you should watch them, I think you owe that to the people you work with to watch what you do. Every now and then I

might, I haven't seen *The War Zone* for years you know because it just upsets me you know. *Nil By Mouth* I haven't seen for quite a long time. Maybe I need to have a look at them because you kind of lose your way sometimes.

BH: Well *The Departed* is like huge fun to watch, it's like incredible roller-coaster ride of film.

RW: Yeah, you know if it's on, if I come in and I've been out and switch the, I remember coming home once and *Quadrophenia* was on, and I was with my middle girl and she was 17 at the time, and that's the age I was in *Quadrophenia*. And we just happened to put the telly on, *Quadrophenia* was on, and there was me at 17, and I'm looking at her at 17, now that's quite freaky you know. And I thought, "I look like her. Babe you're not going to grow up like me." No but it's kind of weird you know it is, that's a strange thing, your kids looking at you when you was younger, even though you're playing supposedly someone else, but you know.

BH: You've done all different kinds of films, one very interesting, unusual one is *Beowulf*, where which was one of these motion capture ones.

RW: God I trained and trained.

BH: Did you?

RW: What are you laughing for?

BH: Well we'll see what you mean, because this is what you look like in *Beowulf*.

RW: Oh, I was a sort in this.

BH: Let's have a look.

[Clip from *Beowulf*]

RW: I've just put on all this weight, just for my next part. Yeah.

BH: Was it fun doing it? I mean he's...

RW: That is my favourite way of making a film. I've got to be honest with you, you know *Nil By Mouth* and all that is a different way of working. But there is,

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

you go for six weeks, you film for six weeks with the cast. You're not doing animation, you're in a room, it's like doing a play that's being filmed, and you play the whole scene, there's probably 180 cameras, computerised cameras around you. So you play out the scene, but your imagination just explodes because you haven't got the castles there, you haven't got the dragons, so you have to really go into your imagination you know. And you play it, you're playing it with Anthony Hopkins, you're playing it with Brendan Gleeson you know, and you're kissing, er what's her name? Oh Angelina Jolie. Yeah, so you know, it's alright. But you're working with these fantastic actors, but you're, the scenes not getting broken down, you're not saying, "right you know there's three lines there then we'll change the cameras round and we'll go there." It's being shot, so on one take you've got that to the eyeball and you've got the wide shots and mid-shots and all that. And you're just literally playing it, so you're knocking out three big scenes a day, and you're getting into it you know, there's no time to mess around. You go in your T-pose, you do this T-pose, so I don't know if they still do that. But you are performing, and then they dress you after, they paint in the costume, they paint in your eight-pack you know, they make you look alright. And the castles are put in after and the dragons are put in after. But you've actually had to go in and get your imagination bubbling. And I thought it was a fantastic way of working, I really did. I know why Andy Serkis loves it so much, you know I understand because you have to really think about your movement. You know I had to age from a young warrior there to an older king you know, and you just slow down, but you have to think of that, you have to think of the pains and the way you move, and the voice just slightly changes. And it's fantastic, I loved it.

BH: Robert Zemeckis directed that, you worked with Steven Spielberg I wanted to mention. Incredible fun was it working on those?

RW: Yeah it was like working with a family, I mean because them people have got their crew around them for

years and years and years, and it's like telepathic with them, you know they know what they're doing. And you know it was *Indiana Jones* I done because it was Steven Spielberg, I wanted to work with Steven Spielberg, of course you do you know. It was actually a film my kids could actually go and watch without me swearing, effing and blinding you know. But it was great, it was good fun yeah. And with Johnny Hurt again.

BH: And *Noah* was a remarkable film. Darren Aronofsky seems like an incredible, maverick talent.

RW: He's a director he is, he's got everything. I mean he's got the imagination, I mean you see *The Wrestler*, so you know he can do the gritty stuff and all that. What a performance as well in that by Mickey Rourke you know. But Darren can do the gritty stuff, and so when you knew he was gonna make *Noah* you knew he was gonna make an epic but there was gonna be a bit of grit in there as well. I mean you're gonna get that with Russell Crowe you know.

BH: There's a lot of you and Russell shouting at each other in that film.

RW: Yeah, we were growling at one another a bit, yeah. I kind of thought I was the good guy I think. Well you know I wanted to save the human race, he wanted to save the animals. I like dogs and cats and that, but I think I'd rather save my mates first, but there you go.

BH: And I wanted to mention a film, *Ashes*, which is really interesting because in that you play a guy with Alzheimer's.

RW: Yeah I did, with Mat Whitecross, a talented, talented director you know, a very talented boy. And we made the film, and the film never got a release. They kind of wanted to put it in a box you know, it was either a, it was a thriller, I just happened to have Alzheimer's in it. And again you know you wanna, I went and had a look at this properly because thank God no one in my family's been touched by that yet, you know but it's a big disease you know. And they just didn't know where to place the film, not that, I think all British films are very difficult

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

to place anyway because we don't have any cinemas you know. We concentrate on spending money on making movies here, but we don't concentrate on actually buying the places to put them in. You know Warners, Sony and all that own the cinemas, and quite rightly they want to put their movies in, or something that's very, very special, but you know you go to France and Germany and they've got their own cinemas and they put their own films in it. And not because I'm saying it was a great film actually, I like the film, I thought it was a really good film but that's me you know. But there's a lot of films I've seen being made that I'm not to do with, there's a lot of rubbish as there is anywhere you know, but there's a lot of films that don't get an airing, don't get a look in you know. And maybe we need to look at where we're putting them, there ain't nowhere to put them. There's one or two independent film cinemas that are around like the one in Mile End and I think there's one in Notting Hill Gate still, you know and probably some other cities, but we need some more about you know, we need places to put these movies, otherwise what's the point? What is the point of actually making a film? Because that's what you think of now, well is this film going to get seen? I want to make it because I love it, but it's not going to be seen.

BH: Yeah. I mean let's mention quickly the book because in that you do talk about how important it was going to the cinema and all of that. And it's a book that kind of goes through, it's incredibly honest kind of thing, about going through your youth and going through your young life, but kind of incorporating stories about making films like *Scum* and *Quadrophenia* and all of that.

RW: There's a bit of that in there, I actually, they've been asking me a long while to write a book, I don't know why. But I didn't really, I didn't want to make a, write a book about the film industry. I mean there's been millions of them done. And they said, "well what do you want to write about?" And I said, "nothing really." You know the best stories you can ever tell usually involve other people and you know, and it's like

being a grass really. I thought, "no, I won't." But I don't know, I had an idea about just writing about, which affects everyone in a way, about just you growing up. How did you get to where you are? How did you get through that, them times? I was born 12 years after the Second World War, you know I guess a lot of people in here were you know, just after the Second World War. And we still had bomb sites and all that kind of thing, and kids just growing up, and the idea was to go and work in the docks or the meat market or the fruit market, and all of that's kind of gone now as well. So you know it was really about family life and what made me what I am, and I guess what makes everyone what they am. And I didn't kind of just write it for me, just it was just a story. And the more I was writing it, the trouble is when you write a book there's so much dark side, it's like you only remember the dark things, and then when you really sit down and think about it you had a wonderful time as a kid growing up. I had a great time as a kid growing up, but it's just them dark stories of you know of death and doom and destruction that you kind of, maybe I'm just, I don't know it's something wrong with me. But you do, you know.

BH: But there are funny stories, and in fact the whole thing's written, you completely hear your voice in it, it is you know.

RW: Well we just talked, I said I just want to have a conversation. You know because I couldn't write a book, and I just wanted to sit down and just talk, and just tell stories you know. And I think that's, you know that's what it's about. I'm kind of pleased with it, it's very difficult reading something that it's about you, you know what I mean. It's, you're going oh, it's like saying, "I loved that bit," you know what I mean, it's about me innit you know. So how do you cope with, I always find it a little bit embarrassing you know.

BH: I've read it, it's incredibly entertaining.

RW: You like...

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

BH: It's really good fun, yeah, and there are some brilliant stories about people in the acting business as well, I have to mention.

RW: Well there's a couple.

BH: Oh it's not the whole thing, but there is some, especially towards the end. Let's mention some of the stuff you've got coming up. You've got a film coming up with Robert Carlyle, a film that he's directed. So again you're working with another great young actor who's a director as well.

RW: Well he ain't that young no more.

BH: Alright, he seems young to me.

RW: No, but he's one of the good guys in this game Robert, and we've been great mates for many, many years yeah. Emma Thompson's in it as well, yeah so she came up and did a stint in it, she was blinding. God her Scottish accent's fantastic, oh mate, well I think she comes from a, whatever she does you just sit there and watch her and you just go...

BH: So it's called *The Legend of Barney Thomson*, is that right?

RW: Yeah I think, I can't even remember.

BH: It is. And *Point Break*, you're doing the remake of *Point Break*.

RW: Yeah, yeah, I'm playing Pappas in that.

BH: Did you have qualms, that's such a kind of iconic film, do you think, oh should I do that, or is it, no this is going to be good, you're gonna do it.

RW: No, it pays the rent, to be honest with you. And it's good people working on it as usual, but it's been going on you know. I feel like I've been on it three years and I ain't you know, but you've been travelling to places like, well I've been in Berlin, all over Europe, Brindisi, Italy, which I love Italy you know. And I've been to Tahiti, and I'm going to Venezuela in a couple of weeks to finish it off, and you know I've had enough now, I've done it now you know. But it's the travelling, I ain't being funny the

travelling actually slaughters you. It's such a tough life, I've got to tell you.

BH: And on that note, let's take some questions from the audience. There's microphones so, yep, there's a lady there on the end. Oh is it a gentleman? Sorry, that's a good start.

Q: Thanks for coming, it's been really interesting. You mentioned a couple of times that you are attracted to the bad guy characters, I wondered why that was. And also I can't help asking, do you ever you know pull over for a paper and go in a shop and people are properly terrified of you?

RW: [Laughs] No. I pull over to a shop and go and get the papers yeah. No I don't think so. I did have a problem, my wife said this to me, she said, "why do you when you walk into a room look like you're going to kill someone?" And I went, "I don't babe, I'm just walking into a room." She said, "you look like you're going to kill someone," and she got quite the hump with me actually. And I sat there and thought about it, and I think it is because you're shy, and what you do you stick your chest out you think, right. And it's like walking in here tonight you know, there's a load of people here. And behind it you're like that, "fucking hell" you know, "what am I going to talk about here?" And so you just have to take a deep breath, it's the old boxing thing, go [deep breath], right, and have it you know. Maybe that makes me go a bit like that, I don't know, but I don't mean to you know, you know it's horrible innit. But what was the other question?

Q: About why you're attracted to bad guys?

RW: Oh they're interesting ain't they? I guess there's a bit of bad guy in us all you know. I think probably as you get, when you've played bad guys and bad guys and bad guys it makes you change to play the good guy, you wanna play the good guy. When I play the bad guy I always think of him as the good guy, and when I play the good guy I always think of him as the bad guy, it's funny you know, you just find the other things in people. Because we've all got it in us you know, have you?

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

Q: I wouldn't like to say.

RW: You've got to have it.

BH: I called him a lady so he's probably got it in for me I imagine.

RW: I'll rephrase that.

BH: It was dark at the time, that's my only excuse. Oh this gentleman, just further along yeah and then just behind, yeah.

Q: Thanks Ray. I just wanted to find out what you look for in scripts, you know what excites you.

RW: That's a good question because, I'll give you an incident. When I was, I read *Sexy Beast* on a plane, I was given it and I knew it was the same guys who wrote *Gangster No. 1* because originally I was gonna do *Gangster No. 1*, and there was a lot of politics that you know, people fell out when they was on it, because they was gonna do the trilogy, it was gonna be the three films you know. And there was a big fall out, and I had a choice of doing *Sexy Beast* or *Gangster No. 1* at one point, and there was, it was, *Gangster No. 1* was going to be done in a very different way when I was involved in it, and because of the row they took a lot of it out, the writers took a lot of it away with them. And it became, it was alright, it was still alright and Paul Bettany and all that, it was still a good film. And so then *Sexy Beast*, and I was reading it on a plane and I was laughing and crying, I got it you know. And I showed it to Gary Oldman to actually play Don right, and he didn't like it, Gary. It just shows you you know how some actors look at things in different ways to other actors, and you've got to be in tune with it. It just, it hit a note with me you know. It was like *The War Zone*, when I read *The War Zone* you know, it was fucking horrible, and Tim Roth said to me, "why do you want..." He'd seen every actor, he didn't want to use me Tim Roth because I'd just done *Nil By Mouth* with Gary and it was like that South London connection thing you know what I mean. And he said, he told me I was the last actor he'd seen for the part. He said, "why do you wanna do it?" And I said, "it'll make a change to play the good

guy." And I meant that in a way, not as a joke, because that's how these people don't get caught. They're the nice guy, they're the guy you sit with in the pub and you talk to. "He's a lovely fella isn't he? He's got his family, blinding guy you know." That's what I meant by it, and that's how I got the part for *The War Zone*. So it's just, sometimes you pick up a script and you go, "yeah alright I'll do that," because there's nothing else, because you need to go to work you know. But every now and then something comes along and you go, "oh my God, you know what, I'd love to do that."

BH: And down here, oh okay great. Let's come down, this gentleman just at the side here. Yeah, it's just on its way here, coming, there you go.

Q: Thank you very much. Hi Ray, in the summer of 2003 it was announced you were gonna be taking on the role of the Kray twins. It never happened obviously, why?

RW: No I don't think so, I would have remembered.

Q: And a second one, memories of working on *Minder*? But if you wouldn't mind going into details on the Kray twins film.

RW: Well I was going to do the original years ago when Don Boyd was gonna do it, and then it was taken out of Don's hands and it was taken with Ray Burdis who's an old mate of mine, and he went the other way with the Kemp brothers, and they done it, and they done it terrific, you know it was alright. And then years later they came back to me, it was Ray Burdis again, and they were going to do a film of the two, the Kray twins, but they were both banged up as old men. And I said, "well I want to play them both," I said, "the only way to play them, because they're so identical," when they got a but older one got a bit more weighty than the other one, but I said, "I want to play them both." You know it was about a telepathic thing they had going on and all that, and it was sinking back to the old days and you know when they were at it. And they just didn't get it together you know, it didn't

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

happen. And now Tom Hardy's doing it, well it'll be fantastic, what more can you ask for? An old fart like me or you've got Tom, he'll be blinding.

BH: Thank you. Right in the middle there. And the Kray story is in the book, that is in the book, you meeting them, that's all in there.

RW: Oh yeah, yeah.

Q: Hi Ray. Congratulations, it's been really interesting. Out of all your amazing roles which has been for you kind of the most challenging, and how did you prepare for that? And also if you could just, it's something I'm particularly interested in, how you mention about the rehearsal period being so important, if you could just sort of expand on that and what you get from that?

RW: Well most challenging, I think they're all, I know it sounds really silly but I'm kind of like a fish out of water in a way, so they're all a bit of a challenge to me you know. I've got this, it's me, it's not the feeling I get from anyone else when I go to work, I just feel sometimes I shouldn't be in this game you know. It's almost like I should've been doing something else really, but that's my problem you know and that's something that challenges me every time I go to work you know. And sometimes I get a little bit embarrassed about the arty side of things you know, because I'm a tough guy from East London you know, and it's bollocks, it is, it's silly. And the older I'm getting, the better I'm getting at getting away from that you know, and I should have done it a long while ago. So that every time I get a job you know I always think, "I ain't gonna be able to do this you know. I don't know what I'm doing." And then you meet the other people you're working with and they start talking and you start buzzing and you just, and it all kind of, hopefully, falls into place you know. Because you get so much from the people you're working with, you know. And you look at them and you think, "oh aren't they clever. They really worked that one out you know." And then you'll say something and everyone looks at you like you're mad sometimes because you have a weird idea. I've talked myself out of roles, you know I've

gone in with this, you know the script's a really good script and that, and I've seen something in the character that I think will make it much more interesting than the guy that's sat there for 20 years writing this script you know. And I've gone right into one you know about explaining why I think, "wouldn't it be more interesting if you play it like that..." And they're looking at me as if to say, "I don't need no more, that's it," I've lost the job and that's kind of me. So sometimes I'm better off just shutting up you know and letting everyone else just get on with it and then away you go, go with the flow you know. And what was the other question, I've forgotten.

Q: About the rehearsal period and why it's so important for you.

RW: Oh, I just think it is you know. As I said, sometimes you know you can make a film with no rehearsal period at all and it works. And I think it's more luck than judgement you know, or you've just got really clever people that actually get it quite early on. But if you can always have, you know you only need two or three or four days, you don't need weeks of it, but you just get there and you just talk with everyone round the table and the director and we all flow, and then all of a sudden bang you're on the set and you're on and running, you're running you know, you're there. So you've cut out them first day kind of blues getting to know one another and all that, you know everyone seems to get on the same page you know. And I think for me that's the most important part of making the film until you finish it and you've got to edit it and you know and sell it and all that.

BH: Thank you, got time for a couple more questions. Gentleman just a few rows from the back. Ooh, the mic's just on its way.

RW: Like watching the Olympics.

BH: It is, exciting isn't it?

RW: Don't drop the baton.

Q: Hi. I just wondered if you could say a bit about working on *Minder*?

BAFTA A Life in Pictures: Ray Winstone
5 October 2014 at Princess Anne Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, London

RW: Oh that was good fun, years ago yeah with Dennis Waterman and all that. That was a giggle you know, it was turn up to work, I remember we went away on that, all the *Minder* crew had never been away on location, they'd always worked in London. It just so happened it was one of my episodes that we went to Buckler's Hard I think it was, down near Dorset way, yarr. This, you know what film crews are like most of you I suppose, but this film crew descended on this village you know, and it was like party mood. It's like they'd been given 30 years in the scrubs and just been let out, and it was good fun, it was a party time you know. And kind of in them days TV and that, you know you used to go to Pinewood and the bar would be open all day and you know, it was people would go in and have a drink with lunch, the crew, the sparks, the riggers. I always used to knock about with the sparks and the riggers in the early days and that. I remember coming back off one of my first films called *That Summer!*, we filmed down in Torquay, and I came back in the lorries with all the sparks and the riggers and all that. Because they were your mates, that's where you were from, they were all from the same place as you. You know the actors were all [adopts a posh accent] sort of like this, but you know so you was kind of a different little mob, and thank God that's all changed over the years you know. But *Minder* was the good days, and working with George Cole was, and Dennis, but George was a really good old boy you know, and took time with people you know, put his arm round people and all that. He was great, they was great days actually, yeah.

BH: Thank you, and the lady up there, I think the last one.

Q: I'm sorry I don't really, I hope I phrase this right, if you were starting out now do you think you would make the same kind of progress or do you think it helps if you go to public school or from a wealthy background?

RW: No I don't think it does today, I don't think that helps. Fashions change and all that. I think it would be more difficult for me now for the simple reason I think there's far, far, far more really great film

actors coming out of this country. When I was back in them days, my age group there wasn't many you know who broke into films and were lucky enough to do films you know. I think now there's, when you look at the young talent, I call them young talent they're probably 30/33 you know, but you look at the talent, men and women, actors and actresses, coming out of this country, there's far more who are talented. They really up your game when you go and work with them and all, you know. So I probably wouldn't, if I was at that stage I was then now, I wouldn't get a look in, would not get a look in, not at all. Now it's not because of where I'm from, it's because technically and every other way I don't, I wouldn't know, I wouldn't know how to go about my business, today they do. You get a young actor coming onto set today or a young actress from this country and they know film, they know how to work on film, I think anyway.

BH: Unfortunately that is all we've got time for so I want to thank you all for coming, on a Sunday. I'd like to particularly thank Ray Winstone, thank you so much.

RW: Thank you very much.