



One Stop Doc Shop

Transcript

Episode 1 - Jeanie Finlay



Introduction

(Intro music starts – cinema film reel whirring, and countdown beeps)

Hello and welcome to *One Stop Doc Shop*, a podcast that celebrates and encourages diversity in non-fiction filmmaking. In each episode, a guest filmmaker will share their secrets on how to make award-winning documentaries.

I'm your host Angela Clarke, and this series was made possible with the support of Screen Alliance Wales, Ffilm Cymru Wales and BFI Network funding from the National Lottery.

My guest today is artist and documentary filmmaker **Jeanie Finlay**. With an eclectic body of work under her belt, Jeanie's portfolio includes the Emmy nominated feature ***Games of Thrones: The Last Watch***, BIFA winning feature - ***Orion: The Man Who Would Be King***, BIFA nominated feature ***Seahorse***, and BIFA and Grierson nominated feature ***The Great Hip Hop Hoax***.

In addition, Jeanie has also filmed behind the closed bedroom doors of teenagers in ***Teenland*** for the BBC, as well as directing feature docs on the last surviving record shop in Teesside and the lowest budget pantomime in Nottingham for BBC Storyville. And last but not least, she also filmed *Goths* on a cruise ship!

Driven by a passion to tell small stories quietly, Jeanie is interested in shy people and uses her camera as a loudhailer.

Jeanie and I discuss the inspiration behind each of her films, what makes a good story, trusting your instinct, and seeking out life's unsung heroes.

We also explore the lessons she learnt over the years when it comes to capturing actuality, and her love of creating bespoke cinema experiences for her audience.

I hope you enjoy listening...*(music ends)*

13

Wonderful
★★★★
Empire
★★★★
The Independent
★★★★
The Daily Telegraph
★★★★

SOUND IT OUT

Like a must-pressing
suburban hit
Sound It Out is a rare find
New York Times
★★★★
Evening Standard
★★★★
Sunday Times
★★★★

The very last record shop in Teesside, UK
A documentary by JEANIE FINLAY




Vinyl-Tapes
Posters-Memorabilia
CDs-DVDs

CELEBRATING Record Store Day Sat 18 April 2020
WATCH PARTY: 6pm TWEETALONG #sounditout
REUNION SHOW: 8pm hosted by JOSIE LONG
WATCH the film for FREE 17-24 April
www.jeaniefinlay.com

glimmer films

13

★★★★★
LITTLE WHITE LIES

"A POP-CULTURAL PARABLE...
FAUST GONE NASHVILLE"
SIGHT & SOUND

"A MUST WATCH"
ROLLING STONE

"A VIVID WHIRL"
VARIETY

"A MUST SEE"
THE WRAP



ORION

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING

A film by JEANIE FINLAY

release
2019

NASHVILLE

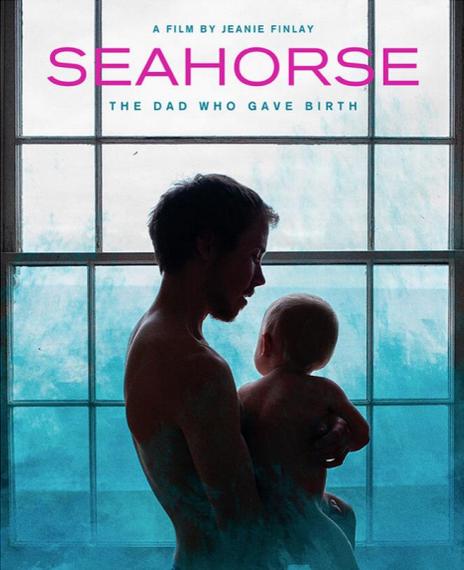
Bluefield

14

A FILM BY JEANIE FINLAY

SEAHORSE

THE DAD WHO GAVE BIRTH




15

"Wonderfully uplifting"
RADIO TIMES

PANTO!

71 MINS. A FILM BY JEANIE FINLAY

"Funny and poignant"
THE GUARDIAN



Angela Clarke – So Hi Jeanie, welcome to the *One Stop Doc Shop*...

Jeanie Finlay - Hello Angela, thanks ever so much for having me one, it's nice, nice of you to think of me.

Angela Clarke - I'm a big fan of your work, so I'm excited to talk about your films. We've obviously got huge amounts to cover in one podcast, so it's kind of like where to begin! But I know you've said before you are interested in shy people telling small stories, so can you explain a little bit more about what you mean by that?

Jeanie Finlay – I guess I'm allergic to show offs. I feel like alpha people and very dominant, loud people get their say in life all the time, and actually I'm interested in the power of film to amplify small stories. And by that what I mean you know maybe shy people who have never spoken publically before. I want to broaden the idea of who a film talks to and the way that people are talked to. I'm very mindful when I make films, I think I take it seriously. My films may not always be serious, but I take the process seriously, and I want to care deeply for the people I make films about. I don't want to make films that look like the way everyone else makes films...

Angela Clarke - When did you first become interested in people, when did you decide that was the thing you wanted to do with your life?

Jeanie Finlay - Oh my god, well I mean I didn't study film; I didn't go to film school I went to art school. I did two years of fine art and then I moved to Nottingham and started a degree in contemporary arts, so that is 50% music, and 50% visual arts and so I was playing cello. This is a podcast so you can't see, but there is a cello over my right shoulder.

So I was playing, recording music, just playing music all the time, but also doing visual arts, and I used to paint a lot and do installation work. It's weird, when I left university, there was much more interest in me doing music and being a cellist. But I always wanted to tell stories, and I was interested in human narratives and small interventions in the world.

You know I made artwork for a long time. I was making work for galleries and public spaces; it was all work that involved human beings, other people, and interventions. I was interested in sort of, I don't know, I guess I was always interested in making a connection and interviewing the public and so I sort of feel like what I am doing now, is an extension of the same thing.

But not going to film school, coming at film like an artist meant, I came in as a director, and then I started producing as well and so it enables me to make work in the way I want to make it, and to keep the promises that I make to contributors. And what I would say is when I sort of left university and I was a young person figuring out what it is that I wanted to do, I was trying to make art

13 work, but it's hard to survive as an artist. And so I set up a company with a photographer, Jo Wheeler. We set up a little company called Free Hand (*laughs*) where we could get work sort of doing art with the public, interactive artwork (*laughs*) and it was very cool.

We were doing photo stories and edible art works (*laughs*) and then I ended up getting this job running an arts project with older people for three years, and let me tell you, if you can persuade 65 to a 104, I think she was my eldest. If you can persuade pensioners to participate in an art project they have no desire in participating in, it's the greatest foundation to becoming a documentary filmmaker that you will ever have. You know I used to drive out to Derbyshire, and have all my gear, put all my gear in the back of the car and was making work with people in village halls and old people's homes.

14 It was a weird sort of time but I sometimes feel like it's important to do something that you can do, but that you don't really want to do, to inform what it is that you truly want to do in life. And from making that project, I was commissioned to make an artwork for a scheme called *Year of the Artist* and the idea was that artists would do a residency in a factory, or I don't know, a garage or just a place of work.

And I'd been doing all this work with older people and found it endlessly fascinating that there was these people who had lived incredible, rich, valuable lives but that the assumption that you could make was that they were just this dodderly old lady.

15 But you know and you could be speaking to someone that used to be a spy, or was a carpenter! You know people had hidden histories that were sort of washed clean when people let their assumptions get in the way and so I just sort of thought look, I've have got to the point in my life where I never ever want to facilitate anyone else's creativity other than my own and I want to do a residency in some people's living rooms; I think that would be really interesting. And I want to work with people who are isolated and for some reason or other can't leave their rooms - can't leave their house.

16 So I made this interactive artwork, it was called **Home-Maker** and it was sort of commissioned to go into all these small houses in South Derbyshire. I spent time with all these older people, one on one, and I wanted to do photographic portraits of people in the space that they couldn't leave. I would make it interactive - this was sort of old school coding and so I was coding it. You would click on an object in the room and they would tell you a little story. So you would hear a little story, like an audio thing or a picture, and the company that had got me in had said, 'Yeh it's going to be so good and all our users will absolutely love getting to know how to use that camera and getting to use that scanner', and I was like 'Okay!' (*laughs*) And I would show up, and I'd do all the photographs and we'd have a chat, and I'd eat some elderly biscuits and have a cup of tea and then I'd say 'Okay now this is...', and they would say 'What are you doing?' 'We have got no interest in that absolutely', and what they wanted to do was tell their story. All they wanted to do was to talk and to be heard.

13

And so what I decided to do, I went home and I was like this is not working – I’ve got to adapt. So I borrowed a camera off my now husband Steven and I was like I’ll just film it. And I did it, and I made every mistake possible. I wore the noisiest sort of leather jacket, they are just ultra static and they are shot like photographs. And what I sort of realised through doing this sort of organic process, of ending up making a documentary, is that if you ask people to bare their souls, it’s really hard. But if you ask them to tell you about the painting of their ex-wife over the fireplace, their thimble collection on the wall, or the wallpaper that they spent three months picking out, they will tell you their whole lives.

14

So I ended up making this artwork *Home-Maker* and it sort of went viral in the early days of the Internet. It was like site of the day, and I won this Canon award. And I was re-commissioned to re-make the work in Tokyo and it was amazing, it sort of changed my life in that I knew that was what I wanted to do. I could find a way to creatively tell someone’s story and it was okay, and that it felt really super fulfilling. And ultimately I showed, *Home-Maker* – I did a huge tour of the work to galleries around the UK and I was really interested in the Nicholas Barker and Martin Parr series *Sign of the Times*, and so I invited Nicholas Barker to come along to the opening of my show in Nottingham. I had written a book to go with it, and I was talking to him about wanting to make this film and he was like you should just make films, you should just do this, and so I made *Teenland*!

15

Teenland really is like the teenage version of *Home-Maker* and the BBC commissioned me to make a 60 min film off the back of a 10 mins short and this artwork. I didn’t go into it you know wanting to make films, but I remember showing *Teenland* in the cinema and you know it’s my first real film, like 60 mins, and as soon as I heard the audience I was like ‘Oh my god that is it’, and when it went out on TV I was like forget art! (*laughs*) I’m gonna make films, because I can bring all the creativity of art and I can really try come at it in a different way. But that audience engagement is something that is so sort of intoxicating and immediate, and it is really hard to tell stories as an artist and I’d rather be an arty filmmaker.

Angela Clarke - I mean if we can re-wind before *Teenland* you’ve got about a 10 minute short *Love Takes*, I loved that little film, it’s such a beautifully simple conceit. Do you want to explain in case people haven’t seen it, what that film is about?

16

Jeanie Finlay - There was a scheme that the Film Council ran called DV Shorts and the idea was to give people their first shot at filmmaking. I can’t even remember what the budget was – but you got a professional mix, and you got a professional grade and you could have a sound track. It might have been £10,000 maybe. Anyway you had to apply, and I was the only artist that was commissioned.

I had made a series of art works around love and I was interested in the words that people, like what we talk about when we talk about love. I’m interested in

that idea, what are the words that we use, how do we express it, how does love change, how do we fall in and out of love over a lifetime, that was sort of like the conceit for *Love Takes*.

I just found loads of different people through the local paper, through going on the radio, through friends of friends, through casting. So you just meet a different bunch of people and they tell you a mini love story, about having a broken heart, about an unrequited love, and I'd shoot most of them in their bedrooms or in their living rooms. So again they are kind of like portraits but they are quite simple set up.

Angela Clarke - Well what interesting about it is I suppose when people start off making films, when you are trying to get into the film world sometimes people get caught up in that idea that you need a big massive subject or a big massive idea or a big massive story. And what I liked about that idea is, it's a good example, although it's simple interviews, they are edited really tightly and what you've got is that lovely passage from youth right the way through to that first flurry of love; and then love turning sour; and then somebody coming back at it again in older age when your what you are looking for in love is something different from what you were looking at when you were 20.

It's a good example of how you can make a really engaging little piece. But I think it's all about building your voice in those days as well isn't it. When you make those first films, it's about starting to identify who you are, the start of that seed of how you engage with people, and that evolves like it always does when you make another film and another film, like you refine those processes don't you?

Jeanie Finlay - Oh my god, I mean you should be learning, I think it's really important just to have a go, try stuff out and get it finished. Like it's only a short film but I learnt how to direct a mix, how to work with a grade, how to work with a composer because it had a commissioned score. I edited it, and then an editor came in for one day to sort of finish it, and also to problem solve. I think loads of filmmaking is problem solving. I think it is really valuable just to have a go and to try stuff out.

There is a really good sort of Ira Glass quote where he says 'At the beginning of your career, your taste is really good, but your ability doesn't match it'. And you know I see it a lot when I go into film schools and do master classes or go to universities and talk to young people and they really, really want to be amazing and you can see it in them, you can see it in their hearts and their desire, but their ability isn't there yet.

It doesn't come overnight, you have to keep going and the thing that is difficult about film is it takes so many other people and it's expensive so you know it's hard not to feel like 'oh my god' is this my only chance. But in a way, you just have to just quiet that voice and get something finished, get it out there. And I do generally feel very sort of affectionate (*laughs*) towards my older projects

because they occupied so much of your brain and your activity for so long you know I just feel possessed by them.

Angela Clarke - And so tell us a little bit about *Teenland*, in terms of what was the inspiration behind that? Why that particular subject?

Jeanie Finlay - So *Teenland* is a film that tells the story of four teenagers who spend almost all of their time in their bedrooms. As my first sort of full film it's really personal. Like I'm not in the film but I'm sort of in every frame. When I was 13, you know I was very ill, and I spent a year off school. And like looking back now as an adult, I sort of feel me retreating into my bedroom to have a pause, was a pretty much vital part of adolescence and that was really interesting and so that was sort of in the back of my mind that I wanted to explore that.

But when I was in Japan making *Home-Maker*, I read about Hikikomori – the phenomenon of young people spending all of their time in their bedrooms and being sort of facilitated by their family to do that. And I was sort of thinking that was sort of how I was. It would be interesting to make portraits of four teenagers, or three teenagers I think I pitched, and make the equivalent of *Home-Maker*, but make it with teenagers.

So I thought that will be interesting and I wrote it up. And there was a producer that saw all of the DV Short screening and she approached me to see if I would be interested in making something bigger, longer. So we pitched *Teenland* as sort of a 30min film, and she'd tried to get a meeting with Richard Klein, because he was the main commissioner for Regions and Nations at the time. And he was supposed to come to Nottingham because they were doing a documentary day and he didn't show up! He didn't come to Nottingham. So Debbie the producer (laughs), she just like hassled him to give her a meeting and in the end he said, 'You shouldn't really do that but I'm going to give you a meeting so you stop hassling me!' And she pitched like seven films, and he was interested in two.

We had to put some stuff together, sent them off and then he said, 'Okay I'm only interested in this one'. Anyway, he sent us off, I think he gave us a £1000 and said 'Go away and develop it'. And so I met 12 young people and put it together on one A4 side and then he said 'Here is £3000 go away and shoot a pilot'. And we shot a 12 min pilot and he was like 'No no make it eight mins'!

Anyway, we went down to London and I was 6 months pregnant and we pitched this film, and this was when we sort of got the gig. And so this took a year this process and he said, 'Is that going to be a problem with the baby'? And I said 'No it's fine, it will be fine'! I had no idea, I'd never had a baby before. And he just said 'Okay I haven't got a slot for you, but just go make this film and lets make it 60 mins', and I was like what? A 60 min film!... So yeh...

Angela Clarke – Goes to show you though if you hadn't made the other short and you hadn't taken that to a festival you wouldn't have met your producer, so I always think it's good to put yourselves out there in those ways.

Jeanie Finlay – Oh yeh sure and I had crafted it. I knew what I wanted to make, and I knew how I wanted to tell it.

Angela Clarke - In a way I suppose that is what is quite exciting about things because people do get hung up thinking they have to go to film school, and they have to come in a particular way and I kind of think there are a million and one ways you can come to making films isn't there really....

Jeanie Finlay - Oh especially now, you can get an amazing camera, you've got a 4k camera on your phone and you can publish on YouTube. You know that is incredible. When I went to Art College and I did a tiny bit of moving image, we were given pneumatic cameras where you had to carry around a separate battery pack. And then I learnt how to edit on tape to tape, like pneumatic edit suites and it was horrific...

Angela Clarke – So *Teenland* goes down well. That works well for you, you make your first 60min doc for telly, and then us a bit about your next film then *Goth Cruise*.

Jeanie Finlay - *Teenland* went great and I remember Richard sort of saying 'I'm not sure what you've made me but I think its good'. It got *Pick of the Day* in all the national newspapers and I sent off videotapes. Broadway Cinema gave me an assistant. I had a young man that used to come in and he sent off all these VHS tapes to try and get me into festivals. I think we sent off 200 tapes and it got into one, in Missoula, Montana. And so I went to *Big Sky*, and I had the most amazing time and met people that I'm still friends with today. It just really opened my eyes to what documentary could be. And so I went to Brit Doc festival after that and I was introduced to Tigerlily Films and at the time, there was really good regional funding with EM Media and they were co-financing a lot of features and so there was an enormous amount of production going on in the regions.

Angela Clarke – Gosh.

Jeanie Finlay - Anyway I had been thinking about making a film called *Goth till I Die* because I went to a wedding of an old friends sister and she had been Goth at school, and then when she got married, I had sort of imagined her walking down the aisle in a black wedding dress. (*laughing*) And it just sort of set me off on a train of thought thinking, what it is about Goth that people love, that makes them align with that subculture forever?

What is it about it, it's something people never give up so I started to research this film called *Goth till I Die* and I came home from work and Steven said I've found what you need – it's the *Goth Cruise* so I was just like it's perfect. I took it to Tigerlily Films who I had met, and I mean it was pretty much commissioned off a two-word pitch – **Goth Cruise!**

Angela Clarke - Well it sells itself doesn't it? (*laughs*)

Jeanie Finlay - Can you be at your most Goth on a neon lit, floating shopping centre? IFC came on board really quickly, and EM Media co-financed it, so I mean within months, I was on a flight to America. I think it was three months from the first pitch that I was on the flight to America to film a pilot. And we did like a four-city shoot and then, once we'd cut the pilot, they loved the pilot, and it was commissioned to be a feature. I was like yeh, I'm gonna make features now!

Angela Clarke - There was no going back...

Jeanie Finlay - It was just really, I mean making *Goth Cruise* was a total baptism of fire. If you imagine *Teenland* was stuck in kid's bedrooms you know it was very still. *Goth Cruise* was shooting on a floating cruise ship, a neon lit cruise ship with no telephone reception. The walkie talkies didn't work unless you were on the same floor, a crew of six of us, two units and 150 Goths, most of whom were drunk (*laughs*), and we spent a lot of time trying to hunt down the Goths, (*laughs*) there were like 3500 people on this cruise ship and only 150 Goths so I mean it was a total nightmare, but it was also a joy!

Angela Clarke - Yeh (*laughs*)

Jeanie Finlay - And I learnt so much.

Angela Clarke - What was the biggest thing that you learnt from that process then, having being thrown into the frying pan as it were?

Jeanie Finlay - I guess I learnt more later on, later on when I started filming observationally. When I was filming *Sound it Out* I realised the real value of - you just radio mic one person and follow them around and you see what happens. You film with a purpose, when I was on *Game of Thrones: The Last Watch*, because I had such a big crew to deal with, they had to all keep in mind what I wanted. And so I'd have all these simple sayings, and one of them was like, 'If the scene is a kite, who is holding the string?' You need to be following someone's point of view otherwise you are just shooting B Roll.

And I think, I found that enormously challenging on *Goth Cruise*. I was sort of used to creating a portrait. *Goth Cruise* is really not so much about the cruise. The cruise is just an excuse to get to know some of the people who go on the cruise and find out why they wear black, and what it sort of means to them on a sort of spiritual and emotional level. I think if I were making it now, it would be much more sort of, I would follow them much more. And I would probably pay for their cruise or something so that I could have their time.

What I sort of didn't realise before we did the film was Americans get such a short amount of holiday, so this was really, really, valuable. It cost them a lot of money, it was really valuable and they are all drunk, they are all having sex with each other, which they don't want to be on camera. (*laughs*) And so what I would have probably done was you know, if you are doing this, you know you have got to be all in. I think I was too polite, I was too like, 'Oh I will meet you at 4pm and

we will shoot some stuff, and so what I ended up with was really lovely portrait stuff using the cruise as a backdrop rather than being more enmeshed.

Angela Clarke – Mmm.

Jeanie Finlay – But you know, that is what I know now, (*laughs*) after doing a ton of observational filming – you know many hundreds of hours of observational filming and that is really tricky and hard to do. Like anyone can set up a nice interview shot, it's really simple, it's really straightforward. But capturing something beautiful in the moment, that is the thing that's most exciting, but it's also the thing that is also the most challenging...

Angela Clarke – Yeh and I think that is a skill that takes a long time to develop because you're right, you do feel too polite in in those early stages and you don't want to - you're always fearful you don't want to annoy anybody, you don't to offend anyone. And also I think as well, when anyone is thrown into an environment where there is so much going on, in a short space of time, it's really hard not to panic. I can imagine it would have been a bit like a needle in haystack trying to find people, and then there are so many other external factors to battle with like noise, people....

Jeanie Finlay – Music.

Angela Clarke – Yeh.

Jeanie Finlay - Constant music everywhere. So we constantly spent the whole time, there were two assistants, and their job was to get the music turned off everywhere we went. Now, I remember at the beginning I would be like, 'Oh just turn it down a bit', and now I know that when you are in the edit and you hear the music and it's recognisable, you've got to pay for it!

Angela Clarke – Yep.

Jeanie Finlay - You know it might be ten grand, that's you whole budget!

Angela Clarke - And your production manger comes after you! (*laughs*)

Jeanie Finlay -Yeh and on a low budget film, so you know that is the point where you lose your qualms about doing that pretty quickly, it's like that needs to go off or we stop filming...

Angela Clarke - So once you've had your baptism of fire, next there is a kind of couple of films then, there are a couple of films that are all juggling at the same time - so post **Goth Cruise** – where does Jeanie turn the corner and explore now?

Jeanie Finlay – (*laughs*) Well **Goth Cruise** is weird in away that it did so well on TV. It did great on IFC, I think it was their most down loaded title ever, it was

huge. But again, it didn't really do any festivals so I was like, 'what am I doing wrong', without understanding the whole festival game when you've got to get the right place to premier. Anyway after that, I did like a development programme with the Scottish Documentary Institute called *Inter Doc*, and what they did was they took you to four different cities and the aim was you would develop a documentary and pitch it and so you had to take one project, and so I took **Orion**.

It was a film I deeply, deeply wanted to make. I tried pitching **Orion** a couple of times, and I could not get arrested with that film! I thought it was an amazing story, and I shot a few interviews with it and I just sort of thought, you know what, I'm just going to keep it on the back burner because I need to be more experienced for people will take a risk on this film, it's risky.

Angela Clarke - Okay so that is the film about Jimmy Ellis then, so do you want to explain a little bit about what that film is?

Jeanie Finlay - It's called **Orion; The Man Who Would be King** and it's a sort of stranger than fiction Nashville fable about a man who sounded *exactly* like Elvis! Not just a bit, he sounded like Elvis back from the grave. And he basically had been persuaded by Sun Records, Elvis's original record label, to wear a mask, and hundreds of thousands of people believed that Elvis had risen again!

So he was launched just after Elvis's death, and I sort of came to it because we had bought a record at a car boot sale for one pound with this masked man on the cover and it was one of those untold stories that no-one else was looking for because we just did the research. And I just thought it was great, like a mask was a sort of a literal symbol (*laughing*) of something interesting, of pretence, of desire! Anyway, I tried to pitch it, but it was too early.

So then I started to make **The Great Hip Hop Hoax**, I'd read about Gavin Bain's story in *The Guardian*. Contacted him on My Space, (*laughing*) I went down and started filming him like three or four days later. I'd bought a camera with the money I had made from **Goth Cruise**, and so I just went down and started filming him. I think he loved being filmed and we just started to film it, to see how it went and there was seven other filmmakers at that point trying to get access to Gavin's story cause it had gone crazy after being in *The Guardian*.

Anyway, he then signed a fiction deal with another company and they offered him his own documentary with his own creative cut and they believed that our film would be incompatible, and so he wasn't allowed to make our film anymore. I was just on hold for ages and we were sort of in lawyer's offices and having to try to work out what to do. In the end Jonny Persey at Met Films is very pragmatic, and he just sort of said, 'Look, there are two guys here in this story, everyone is talking to Gavin because he is the one who sold his story to *The Guardian*, go and get the other guy'.

So we went up to Dundee, that was where they started out, and Billy was up in Arbroath and we met with Billy who was fantastic. Signed him up and started to

13 just sort of pitch the film and got all the access on board, got Storyville on board, got BBC Scotland and raised all the money and then we were like it's not quite right, we need the other guy. How do we do this? And I just got so fed up of not quite being able to do it and you know I think sometimes it is just worth waiting.

13 So I started to film **Sound It Out** and I was like you know what I just want to make a film for no money. I want to just want to go and make a film, and feel the joy of holding a camera and telling a story. And so *Sound It Out Records* is a record shop in Stockton on Tees, really close to where I grew up. I had been spending loads of time at home because my mum had breast cancer and I'd been supporting her through chemotherapy and it was terrible, and it was a really bad time. But *Sound It Out Records* and seeing Tom was a real joy and I sort of realised, this is haven for me and it's a haven for everyone else who goes in here.

14 I used to joke every time I went in that one of these days I'm gonna make a film about your shop Tom ha ha ha and yes you are of course you are and I said 'You know what, I'm just gonna come back up north and I'm going to sleep in my old bedroom, and I will bring my new camera with me.' (laughs) I said, 'Can I just give it a go', and he was like, 'Yeh yeh fine, whatever' and Tom was just like totally up for it and so I just started filming.

14 And it was such a liberation to go from two units on **Goth Cruise** to just being me on my own, and just seeing what happened. I just decided to film on my own and I kept on filming, and so you know **Orion** and **The Great Hip Hop Hoax** were sort of rumbling in the background, but not really going anywhere and I just started filming **Sound It Out**. I filmed for a year on and off and I thought I think this is quite good. I think this is good, and I think Tom is great.

15 **Angela Clarke** - The human Shazam!

15 **Jeanie Finlay** - Yeh yeh he is just brilliant. And also it was an opportunity to make a film about more than music, a film about where I grew up. What music means, what the North East means, about this analogy place, in an analogue town sort of thing, and a film about men. You know it had a 99% male clientele and I was the 1% female in there. It's not like that now I must stress, but I liked the idea of just having a go, just making a film. I decided to crowd fund it, and Charlie Phillips who is now at *The Guardian*, he said just try crowd funding it and I kept giving it a go. I carried on with **Sound It Out**, I crowd funded it, I got the film finished, cut it really quickly, edited it in 6 weeks.

16 **Angela Clarke** - Really!

Jeanie Finlay - Yeh, it was super quick.

Angela Clarke - Ah okay. Did you have quite a lot of rushes to plough through?

Jeanie Finlay - I didn't over shoot, probably like 90 hours?

Angela Clarke - Like how long did it take you to scope the characters you decided to focus on out?

Jeanie Finlay - You see me meeting them in real time on camera. So because I was there, Tom had told me about Shane so I knew that I had to film Shane and so you see me going 'Hiya are you Shane?', and he introduces himself, and so then I only do one visit to their home, so it's very efficient. And I knew I wanted some metal lads and then when the metal lads came in I was like they are alright and so I talk to them, and then I film them at their home. I just knew they were the right people, and so you are getting to know them in real time with me.

Angela Clarke - So was that quite liberating because you could just go and do that then? Was that something you enjoyed, that process wasn't as frenetic as doing as *Goth Cruise* had been? That you could just go and spend a bit more time.

Jeanie Finlay - There was just no pressure, because there was no commission and that was it. I mean when I first started making *Sound It Out*, I did a development programme with Northern Film & Media and I pitched it to the BBC and they were just like the name is good, but the stories are not interesting enough, it's too boring. It's charming but boring, and no one will watch a film about a record shop. And I just sort of thought, I don't agree with them and that is fine that they aren't into it, but I guess that just means I have to try make it without BBC money.

And the whole idea of crowd funding was just like, I can just make this like an artwork, lets just make it, and make it on my own terms. And it's a bit ramshackle, you know I'm learning how to film, I've not filmed that much on my own before because *Teenland*, *Love Takes* and *Goth Cruise* all had DOP's on them. So it was me directing a DOP but instead, this was me learning how to shoot again.

And I bought like a Canon 7D when I was making it and so I started to shoot on a 7D and that felt really comfortable. I was like this is small and light and easy and I can put it really near my face if people are having a conversation. I think it was just being less embarrassed about, the film is about a conversation between me and the person. There is a chemistry that is happening and an interaction is happening because I'm there and in that space at that time. They are telling me that story because I've prompted it. I've prompted the question so it's okay to include the question, and I had never included my voice in anything before, I sort of felt too self conscious about it and then I sort of thought I think it's okay. I think it's okay because filming is weird and I don't agree, I don't believe in 'fly on the wall'! I'm a really big fly (*laughs*), why don't I just draw attention to the fact that I'm there.

Angela Clarke - Mmm.

Jeanie Finlay – You know like the old bloke who always comes in and says ‘Eh up darling, what you doing’. You know he interacted with me because of who I am in that moment...

Angela Clarke – Mmm.

Jeanie Finlay – And would have interacted with, I don’t know my husband or with Tom in a different way, so that is about the film making process. And so yeh, it’s sort of the first time that I show it. And then the thing that is weird is I mean **Sound It Out** for such a small film, it was made with such, it felt like the purest sort of expression of how I wanted to make films, in terms of my heart and my approach, and yeh being heartfelt I guess. And all these ideas I’d had about small stories, you know realising it, and it had taken me three films to really get there, and it’s that idea of it’s a bit shonky but so is the shop and it fits the spirit of the film and it’s okay and I love it. I deeply love **Sound it Out**, and people ask me about it and all the time.

Angela Clarke – Mmm.

Jeanie Finlay - But also making that film liberated me. It made me, it got into *South By South West*, it was in The New York Times and it had theatrical releases in lots of different countries, including this one and people showed up and people came along with the journey. And so it really, I just sort of felt, people were like it’s your breakthrough, it’s your first film, and I was like well it isn’t, but you know sometimes it just takes you a while to get there!

And then Gavin came to a screening of **Sound It Out** at Rough Trade on *Record Store Day* and he had sort of been popping up a bit around that time but he was like ‘Do you want to make **The Great Hip Hop Hoax** again, and do you still want to do it?’ and I was like, ‘Yeh’ and he said ‘Shall we do it?’, and I said ‘Yeh’, and so we just went straight into production because all the money was lined up...

Angela Clarke – Again it’s a lovely example of one of those beautiful ideas that seems so simply, and almost so obvious that you think why did I not think of that! You know although it’s about a music shop, it’s not about a music shop really, it’s about those stories and attachments and about where music allows you to go and you can dream big, and remove yourself from the hum drum of everyday life, it’s that escapism. So it’s about all those things isn’t it? And Tom is an amazing character, well all your characters are lovely and everyone engages with them, but I think that is a great example of taking something really small and local, and having that ability to translate to audiences round the world isn’t it as well, it’s tapping into that, that makes that film, that is what is really beautiful, it’s the essence of it isn’t it?

Jeanie Finlay – I hope so yeh. It just worked and people would always come and go, ‘Oh I know a Tom, oh I know a shop like that’, and it was picked up as the official film of *Record Store Day* and so it got, and then we put it out on DVD and sold the DVD’s out really quickly, and it was the perfect fit for crowd funding. It

13

also meant there were a lot of people who were really invested in me making a film like that. I think people enjoyed following the story of **Sound It Out** and how it evolved, and we did four crowd-funding campaigns for it, which is wild, and I would never do that again! *(laughs)*

But I remember when **The Great Hip Hop Hoax** premiered at Edinburgh Film Festival after South By South West and people would sort of come up to me at the end and say 'Oh yeh, I've been following you, I supported **Sound It Out** and I'm here for you for this', and it felt lovely, really so lovely that people had good will.

14

Angela Clarke – And I think the other thing that you have always done that has been quite an interesting thing is you've had these really super bespoke attachments at the end, when the film has been released to cinemas and things. You've done some really cool stuff in terms of **Orion**, you had all the engagement with the audience wearing masks and stuff as they watched the film and with **Sound It Out** you did lots and stuff. Why is all that important to you? What do you enjoy about that process and why are you so engaged with giving the audience a bespoke experience after the film has been made as it were? Because it's almost like creating another little mini project isn't it!

15

Jeanie Finlay - Yeh we look at them as, Dr Judith Aston described this process as wrap around art work, wrap around filmmaking and wrap around art works and we worked with her on **Orion** and because we worked with the University of the West of England to really study and understand the audience. And I've worked a lot with Sally Hodgson, who is a producer of marketing and distribution and when I was an artist, and we were making work publically I always wanted to engage with an audience.

16

And just because you made a film, can you continue that engagement, can it extend from the cinema. So there was just like little touches, like we just really thought about it and with **Sound It Out**, we really went to town. When we did the theatrical experience, we wanted to extend that sort of home-made, hand-made feel. So I remember we did a big screening in Stockton and I had made *(laughs)* cakes for the whole audience and my dad had printed out little record labels on rice paper. My dad was cutting them out with nail scissors so we could put them on and we handed them out the audience. And we did stickers a lot with people because it felt really important to touch the audience *(laughs)* in some way, it sounds a bit weird. But we had some really...*(pauses)*, it opened up some really lovely connections.

16

Like I remember showing **Sound It Out** at the Cameo in Edinburgh, and the usher was busy, so I was basically walking up and down the isles and handing out the stickers. And I handed a sticker to this guy, and then I realised it was Bill Bailey and at the end of the film he came over and was like, 'Hello my name is Bill', and I was like, 'Yes it's Bill Bailey – Hello'. And he sort of said, 'Tell me what can I do to help your film, to help people know about your film?' and he told all of his millions of Twitter followers to watch the film!

Angela Clarke – Excellent.

Jeanie Finlay – So we had lots of lovely kindness, but yeh I wanted to speak to people, it felt really enjoyable, it was really nice. And like with **Orion**, I wanted people to think about the action of wearing a mask, and the mask was the symbol of the thing that transformed Jimmy Elis into this sort of other worldly Orion. And so it seemed absolutely to make sense to me, to make masks to hand out at screenings with the instruction ‘Would you wear the mask?’ And then we had a hashtag, and we did social media scraping, to sort of gather things like photos of the audience, because it all lives on. I like the idea that you make something that permeates different media and so I guess that is sort of more the sort of artist thing. And when we made **The Great Hip Hop Hoax** I hand made lie detector fish do you remember them?

Angela Clarke - Oh yeh...

Jeanie Finlay – The fortune-teller fish?

Angela Clarke - With the little bits of what’s it called that plastic cellophane that curls up in your hand?

Jeanie Finlay – Yeh, but I re-drew the container, the envelope and I had 500 enveloped reprinted and instead of saying ‘Fortune Teller’ it said ‘Lie Detector’, and I changed all the words. And I would hand them out in person at screenings, so you would only get one if you went to a screening that I was personally at and I would hand them out and I would like the idea that of an artist multiple...

Angela Clarke –Yeh like a little keepsake.

Jeanie Finlay – Yeh or making merch, making DVD’s it’s all the work, it’s all an extension of the work. Your DVD’s should be made with as much love and care and attention as the title sequence, and the trailer or the leaflet. Many more people may see the peripheral stuff than will ever see your film so it needs to be made with as much care...

Angela Clarke - And that was the other thing I was going to say, you had great posters on **Hip Hop Hoax** and **Orion** and **Sound It Out** but I think there is always a real craft to those things - that image that I’m going to have for my poster. At what point do you make those kinds of decisions?

Jeanie Finlay – It depends on each film. And you know pragmatically sometimes it depends on how many partners are involved (*laughs*) and how many people get a say. For example, on **Game of Thrones: The Last Watch**, the opening credits of that film are hand embroidered and we had them hand embroidered in Northern Ireland by the women, it’s all women who do them. But usually it’s is problem solving, and with the opening of that film - we had got this opening and all of the stars at the premier of Season 7, 6 (*pauses*) or 7!

13

Anyway, we had filmed it in Los Angeles and I thought it's quite a good way of showing all the hype. There were loads of paparazzi there and the stars and the famous people and all that sort of Hollywood thing.

14

But it didn't quite work. I wanted to also show the kind of history of *Game of Thrones*, so you could get people in even if they didn't understand the film and I wanted to it feel handmade, became that is my filmmaking approach. And I kid you not I had a dream! So there is a Bayeux tapestry of Game of Thrones, which exists at the Ulster Museum, which is as long as the Bayeux tapestry, and it shows all of the distinct scenes. So it shows you sex, drugs, dragons, death, killing, murder, so it shows you all of these things in a medieval way. And I sort of thought 'Oh my god, we should just film the tapestry' and we should get them to make our tapestry credits.

Angela Clarke - Yeh.

Jeanie Finlay - And so then, that is it the point where you sort of have the creative idea and then you think, 'Oh my god how much is that going to cost?', and 'Who is going to pay for it and have we got enough money in the budget'. 'Can we get into the Ulster Museum to film the tapestry so that we can cut our tapestry in?' So I love that sort of logistical problem. And also, I wanted Hannah Peel who had been commissioned to do the score, she was famous for doing these little sort of music boxes and she does them on stage, she does one of Soft Cell and she likes sings along to it. And I had asked her to make a music box of the Game of Thrones theme tune and I was like perfect, it's all hand made! So yeh they made these epic tapestries and now two of them are sat behind my desk at Broadway Cinema!

Angela Clarke - One of the other things I wanted to ask, with *Orion* and *Hip Hop Hoax* they were both reliant on the re-telling of a story in the past tense, and so what did you learn about that process? What were the challenges that you faced, especially I suppose with *Orion* because your central character, you were telling that story a long time after that central character had been around. What did you learn from that process in terms of trying to unpick that narrative and still give that film a voice and an authenticity of Jimmy himself?

Jeanie Finlay - I mean I ended up making *Orion* over 6 years and I knew it was going to be really challenging, so by that point because I had made 5 films, I just sort of thought you know what I just need to absolutely persuade everyone here that this is a film that needs telling. And so I had amassed quite a lot of material by that point, so I did a massive amount of work on very little. I think I got something like £10,000 development money from EM Media but I made it go an enormously long way. And I was really thrifty about filming stuff, so I organised a film shoot with one of the cameramen that I met in Missoula Montana at that first film festival, he was from the south so we stayed in Nashville.

13

And I travelled around the South sort of interviewing people and just getting the interviews in and actually showing up. And so we filmed Jim Junior, Jimmy Ellis' son and we filmed him, we were able to film him because his lawyer wouldn't work on a Sunday (laughing) and so he said sort of just come along and we will film you. And he did a devastating interview it was amazing. And then every single time I showed *Sound It Out* or *The Great Hip Hop Hoax* in America I would phone Stuart up and just say 'I'm coming to the States, do you want to do a couple of days filming', and so he was like 'Yeh'.

14

So I would get the university or film festival to pay for me to come out, and then we would just hire a car and we'd stay in a terrible motel and we'd just film it. And I'm so glad we did, because a lot of people in the story were elderly and some of them died, so by the time the film was finally commissioned you know some people had died, I'd shot 80 hours of interview, I had amassed 5000 photographs and I had got like tons of archive video, and I had filmed a 15 min pilot.

And I think sometimes you just have to persuade, you have to make it undeniable, and you know the way to do that and you know couldn't afford to buy all the archive or you know to research it all but I found advocates within the Orion community. So there was a really amazing collector in Norway, a guy called Kenneth Dokkeberg who really loves Orion, had been re-researching a book, really wanted his legacy to be told, and we sort of got a deal that if he found the footage, he would buy it, and I would pay for it to be digitised.

15

So I got access to an enormous amount of original material because this was a guy that, you know he was notorious and renowned, but he wasn't like world famous so it wasn't like you could phone Getty up and so what I ended up doing was speaking to a lot of fans and persuading their children to scan in photographs. Kenneth was buying photo albums, we were paying for material to get transferred, and I guess it was just like to be creative and really think about what are the elements you need.

And also again how to think very carefully about tone and so it was really important to me that it felt organic, so I hand made all of the opening credits and titles that I made with a sort of with gobo you know hand cutting images, and filming light effects...

Angela Clarke - Oh like your little names, and bursts...

Jeanie Finlay - Yeh I made them all, they are all done in camera by hand.

Angela Clarke - Are they? Yeh they look great.

Jeanie Finlay - Yeh thanks. I wanted to do something that was sort of..., these things are always time consuming but they just have a cumulative effect of giving a layer of tone to the film and St Saviour who sings in *Sound It Out*, I worked with her, and used quite a lot of her material off her new album. And I worked

with her again on *Seahorse* and I worked with Hannah Peels band The Magnetic North in *The Great Hip Hop Hoax* and also in *Orion* and then I worked with Hannah again on *The Last Watch* and she has just started working on the new film I'm making she is doing the score for that as well.

Angela Clarke – Cool. And then the last two films that have been released obviously were slightly different again in terms of they were stories that found you rather than you finding them per se so that is obviously making the Game of Thrones documentary following the cast and crew on the last season and then filming with Freddie for *Seahorse* – so filming the process of Freddie going through the birth of his first child. How were those experiences different in terms of you coming at it from a different starting point?

Jeanie Finlay – I mean I guess with both of them the starting point was different like I've never said yes to anyone else before until HBO came knocking and Freddie McConnell came knocking and asked me as a trans guy to follow his journey to becoming a father, and to carry his own baby. But with both of them, I sort of sat Freddie down and just sort of said 'If you want me to do this I'm all in', you know that is the only way I know how to do it. And my sort of approach is when things get tough, you put the camera closer, you don't go 'Oh this is quite hard', and you put the camera away, you have to lean in. You have to lean into the things that feel uncomfortable.

And at the beginning he was like, 'Oh yeh, yeh that is great and it's gonna be so cool and it's gonna be great', and then when he got pregnant and he felt really dysphoric as the testosterone in his symptom depleted. He felt terrible and it was less about being pregnant, and more about just feeling the pain of gender dysphoria, and the sort of cosmic toothache that I will never experience as a CIS woman, but that was my sort of challenge to interpret for an audience.

So it was different but yet exactly the same, and I think that my happy place, you know I feel very happy following an on-going narrative. Finding the beauty in the sort of mundane moments, that makes me very happy, and anticipating where to put the camera, and that is a very different process to telling a story of the past.

Angela Clarke – Mmm.

Jeanie Finlay - And you know there is interesting and exciting things in both. I mean I would say, I'm making two new films at the moment and one of them has been hampered a little bit by the global pandemic, but one of them is archive based and it's telling a story of the past, and so I'm full in production on that at the moment editing remotely. And I've been using Miro a lot that is like a virtual whiteboard programme.

You know I've always printed photographs and paintings out to thrust in the hand of DP's to try and translate what I want, and now I'm just using you know maybe more technologically advanced or more expensive tools. I always think you have to allow the material to lead the narrative, the storytelling. And so with

Freddie when I was with him, it was very much about I'm gonna film this thing today, so it might be a pregnancy test and or going to get a scan but it was also about taking time to sit back and think how do I feel when I'm with him.

I'd run along the coastline and take photographs and stuff, then I'd go back with my camera and film it, and that was sort of the fabric that you see and hear in the film. It's very instinctive, I allowed myself to feel very free when I was making it. And similarly with *Game of Thrones*, it was just very exhausting, it was an amazing film to make, it was very demanding and I knew it was going to have an enormous audience.

So part of it, filmmaking is the easy bit, the challenge is keeping everyone happy, and keeping all the financiers happy, keeping the audience happy and sort of sticking to my guns. Like I always feel there is always a little special sort of something in each one of my films and with *Game of Thrones*, for while I wasn't sure what it was, what I had made for *The Last Watch*. And, when the film was sort of done, I realised it's the people that I have chosen! Because I've applied exactly the same way I made *Sound It Out* or *Panto* to a film about the biggest television show in the world, I think that is really interesting,

Angela Clarke - And I think yeh its through those characters like what is your extra guy called, is in Andrew?

Jeanie Finlay - Andrew McClay, yeh Andy McClay.

Angela Clarke - Yeh I've never watched *Game of Thrones* - I watched the documentary, but I haven't watched the actual series. Andrew is such a great character, he's just got that sort of bursting with enthusiasm and energy and excitement of a man that is celebrating every single day going to work doing a job that he absolutely loves, and there is just a real joy in that!

Jeanie Finlay - Oh Andy McClay is just an absolute... he is a total sweetheart. He's a lovely, lovely guy but also with that, what's quite interesting with that, when I got the commission from HBO, because it was kind of wild and like flying to Los Angeles and pitching the film to the show runners and the exec, Bernie the exec watched *Sound It Out* and she said, 'Oh when I watched that film, I knew you were my girl, you were my girl. You can just make your film and find your heroes'. They were interested in the unsung heroes. So it's not - there is tons of 'making of' stuff, where you can find out how dragons are made and about all of the celebrity stuff. And I was sort of struck when we followed the crew and it was months before anyone even mentioned an actor and I was like 'wow', they really are a just small tiny bit of this enormous machine.

And so the actors are the extras, the famous actors are extras in my film; they are just extras in the background of Andy McClay, the stark guard or Vlad, the night kings story or Sarah the VFX. But I spent four months just wandering around on set just listening and understanding and working out who were going to be my cast, and I think they were somewhat unconventional choices of people. Or you

13 know, just not obvious choices, but they were people that as soon as I met them I was like my god they are brilliant.

You know I am always looking for someone who knows who they are. They know who they are, they are not going to show off, and they don't need to prove anything! You know that Del is going to lay the snow and moan at everyone (*laughing*), and you know have a moan because the real snow is coming down. He is going to do that whether I am there with the camera or not, and also he is going to have a chat with me and be real and tell me about his life in a really sort of compelling and generous way so yeh. I loved making that film and it was really logistically, it was really hard as I was making it in Northern Ireland, so commuting to Northern Ireland and making *Seahorse* at the same time was massively challenging but also hugely rewarding.

14 **Angela Clarke** – Well it's stretching two different parts of the brain at the same time as well isn't it? You've got all the logistic and everything that comes with *Game of Thrones*, there is just so many people, and so many people at one time, and then retracting into Freddie's story where he is internalising all of things that is going on in his head and his dysphoria and everything that is going on round about him as well so it must have been a weird experience to dive between these two projects.

15 **Jeanie Finlay** - Yeh (*laughs*) it was very, it was odd and amazing it was. A couple of years ago I was at Sheffield Docfest because both films played there and there was this moment where once we were all at dinner, (*laughing*) and there was me, and Freddie and Vlad the Knight King all having dinner together! And there is a photo somewhere that I have never got a copy of me in the middle and Vlad and Freddie on either side, and I really want to see it ...(*laughs*)

Angela Clarke – (*laughs*) The two worlds collide! I was going to say what is your favourite part of the filmmaking process?

16 **Jeanie Finlay** – Ermm I like it all. I like the idea, spotting an idea and going, 'Oh my god no one else has thought of that I'm gonna make that into a film', that is really, that is really exciting. And I love filming - filming is such an adventure. I love it when you have that moment, I love that moment in an interview when you just think, I'm already watching the film - this is just great. Or you are filming something and you think that is just magic or something moves into shot or you manage to pull it together - that's great! And then I really love when you have the realisation, 'Oh we could do it like that you know'. Or the moment, I'm just amassing, I'm collating enormous mood boards of what we are going to film and then we've just worked out a photographic technique we are going to use to film some images which I've never done before so I'm really excited about that...

Angela Clarke - I wanted to ask you about *Panto* as well! Again I suppose you kind of filmed, a bit like *Sound It Out* it was a love letter but this time to Nottingham where you are based now, and it was following the last amateur (*hesitates*) panto in Nottingham?

Jeanie Finlay – It's not the last one – it's just the cheapest! (*laughing*)

Angela Clarke - The most economical!

Jeanie Finlay - It's the lowest budget pantomime in Nottingham! (*laughing*)

Angela Clarke - And why that subject, what were you attracted to about it?

Jeanie Finlay – I love panto, I go to panto every year, I take my daughter and this was my local panto. So I was in the audience, and there was this moment in the interval, and it was the first time I'd gone to this am-dram panto and I was sort of both truly impressed - there was like some truly amazing gags and really, really skilled performers on stage who were sort of like 'wow' in another lifetime they could have been on Broadway sort of thing. And then there were some people in the cast who were 'wow', I'm pretty sure I would only see these people in the theatre in this evening. And it made me, I don't know, my mind just wondered, I sort of thought I wonder are they doctors, are they post men, what are their lives?

Am-dram is interesting because people have other lives as soon as they step off stage and so it just played on my mind, the idea of making a film, which is about the difference between life on stage and life off stage and what it means to be an amateur. I'm interested in amateur performance, it's home made, it's done for love, what does it mean to people.

And so I contacted the guy who plays Puss in Boots (*laughs*) because he helped run the panto and just said I'd really, I really I love your panto and I really want to make a film and do you trust me? Can I do it? And I was editing *The Great Hip Hop Hoax* at Broadway Cinema and I would edit all day, and in the evening I would go over to the theatre. And I took it to Met Film, and I think we shot the whole film for 5k.

Angela Clarke – Wow really...

Jeanie Finlay – Yeh. And I never really thought anything more of it, it was a while, I think it was like 2 or 3 years before it made it on to Storyville. They took it when it was at a 90 min rough cut and so we shot it not knowing if it would ever have an audience or not or have a life! And it ended up becoming like the Xmas film for BBC 4 that year. But I loved that film so much; I just knew that it would be a good story. And then it became evident that when the new manager had come into the theatre he was like our baddie...

Angela Clarke - The cutbacks! (*laughing*)

Jeanie Finlay – There was cut backs and he called it their so called 'get in' (*laughing*), so they usually had a week and he gave them one day and so as soon as that sort of came down the line I was like - my god this is going to be a

shambles! So on the day, we're filming them do their dress rehearsal, and they are getting their stuff in to the theatre and because it's amateur, there are a lot of mistakes getting made! And so the mistakes I'd made on *Goth Cruise*, of not following the story, this was just like okay my story is with the Dame who hates Xmas. It's with the production manager, Maggie who is taking this far too seriously and swearing at everyone (*laughing*) and then we are out in the audience with the director having to watch this absolute shambles and make good use of it!

And so I think we had sort of 4 or 5 cameras on the go, and it was just literally about patience - so you put a mic on one person and you follow them, and you follow the action from their point of view. And then when we did that, you start to piece it together, and it really means you have got a lot of coverage. So you can go down from below ground, to up above ground, and there was loads of comedy because the people are funny and I mean you see Maggie at her worst, but you also see her at her absolute best....

Angela Clarke - Yeh.

Jeanie Finlay - They triumph in the end, and you know there are storms in tea cups about Puss in Boots loses his sword, and Mary the props mistress has just had her cataracts done and sprained her ankle so she can't go down stairs and she has lost something! And I don't know, I just loved it. Sometimes choosing the subject matter is just instinct, it just feels and I know, and that is how I cast it and these are the things I think are important to film.

Angela Clarke - And again like *Sound It Out*, there is that same nostalgia to that, all of us have been to pantomimes, it was part of a ritual growing up, it was a thing that you did very year. Again, I suppose it's back to that whole audience participation as well isn't it! You know, yes he is, no she isn't kinda vibe that you get in those theatres as well!

Jeanie Finlay - Yeh it's ultra British and camp and distinct and weird and Nottingham. And I always wanted to make a film about Xmas because it's so strange, and when I was in Japan, the Japanese artist I was working with said that they thought that Xmas in Britain was the thing that seemed just most wild and odd. And I think that when things are odd they are interesting..

Angela Clarke - Well I look forward to seeing what you are doing next. When will your next films be out? (*laughing*)

Jeanie Finlay - Oh god knows what is happening with the world at the moment, I don't know, maybe one this year, I don't know!

Angela Clarke - Well look then, just to wind up, if anybody wants to see - all of your films are on your website JeanieFinlay.com, so you can check everything out there if people haven't seen some of the films and they want to go and look. And similarly, you've got load and loads of information on your website about the

processes that you've undertaken on things like *Sound It Out* and *Orion* with regards to crowd funding etc that people can also read and engage with, there is lots of information there, you've been really generous with sharing your processes over the years. It was lovely to chat to you and thanks so much.

Jeanie Finlay - Thanks so much, thanks for having me on. *(music plays)*

Thank you for listening to One Stop Doc Shop Podcast. If you want to keep up to date with our new episodes or show your support, you can subscribe or leave a review on all major podcast platforms.

And if you'd like to know more about our guests, and their films, then head over to our One Stop Doc Shop social media accounts – on Instagram and Twitter.

This was a Wheesht Films Production, made possible with the support of the Screen Alliance Wales, Ffilm Cymru Wales and BFI Network with funding from the National Lottery.

