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‘Alec Baldwin’

On 10th October 2014, Alec Baldwin visited the Cambridge Union society as the second speaker of the Michaelmas term. The chamber was unsurprisingly busy given the current open period of free access. Arriving to a loud applause with his daughter and wife, Alec opened the interview to say how nice it was to get out of London and into ‘the country’.

Talking about his motivation to become a politician, Alec recalled a period in the 1970’s where he was motivated in opposition of the Vietnam war and wanted to make a difference to society. Mr Baldwin continued to talk about his transition from politics into the world of acting, referencing his time at college where his father reminded him of how competitive a career in law was despite his position within a law school.

Mentioning his spontaneous decision to attend a film school Alec went on to compare the difficulty of getting into the industry now compared to the 70’s. Describing how the nature of television has changed from ‘daytime tedious shows’ with ‘plenty of pilot’ concepts to a more refined and targeted content he noted how the proving ground is now on-line, quoting the youtube slogan ‘broadcast yourself’.

When asked for his opinion on how the innovative nature of television might have changed, Mr Baldwin tackled the question by first considering the change of target audience. Talking about how the demographic of cinema users has changed from middle aged parents to young adults and teenagers he went on to describe how TV has been forced to become finely honed and specific, producing high quality drama and entertainment.

Continuing the discussion Mr Baldwin went on to talk about how his personal career and how his aims have been altered as he has aged. Mentioning his excitement as a younger actor in the ability to travel the world, he now values a more stable lifestyle at home with family over filming in different countries.

Mr Baldwin was then asked what he would like to know from Robert Downey Junior who will be speaking at the Union later this term. He mentioned the stereotypical characters typically played by actors of varying age. Suggesting that older actors tend to play ‘judge’ like roles, Mr Baldwin described how celebrities like Tom Cruise and Robert Downey Junior had ‘flipped’ this approach and have traded a more sedate role for a huge tempo action hero at the age of 49. This culminated in Mr Baldwin concluding that he would like to know how Mr Downey Junior feels about playing such a fast paced and traditionally young character given how Alec himself had experienced a lifestyle change throughout his career.

Moving onto discuss his current political views, Mr Baldwin mentioned how he was no longer as concerned with the personalities involved in US government but more about the causes he cares about, specifically animal welfare, renewable energy and



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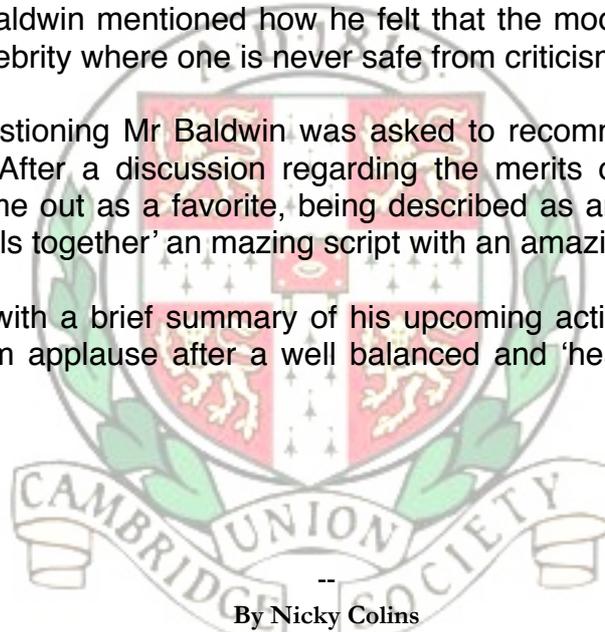
supporting the arts. He went onto mention the contributions he has made to symphonic and classical music within the US.

Mr Baldwin was warmly received throughout the interview and the continued attempts for his toddler daughter to join him in the interview chair was met with laughter from the chamber. Many members of the audience were keen to ask questions to Mr Baldwin ranging from his opinion on what makes a good script to his views on how women are viewed in the industry. Talking on the latter point, Mr Baldwin went on to mention Tina Fey and her contribution to '30 Rock', in particular her influence in bringing more female writers onto the team.

Mr Baldwin was subsequently asked about how he dealt with celebrity status, responding by contrasting the nature of fame in the US and abroad. Talking about the tabloid culture, Mr Baldwin mentioned how he felt that the modern culture has created an 'odd' place for celebrity where one is never safe from criticism.

To conclude the questioning Mr Baldwin was asked to recommend one film he thinks people should see. After a discussion regarding the merits of cinematic quality, the movie "seconds" came out as a favorite, being described as an 'insane' and 'amazing' thriller which 'congeals together' an amazing script with an amazing performance.

Ending the session with a brief summary of his upcoming acting roles Mr Baldwin left the chamber to warm applause after a well balanced and 'hearty' series of questions from the audience.



By Nicky Collins

Co-Head of Press, Michaelmas 2014

PRESS OFFICE