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## **JOSH RADNOR SPEAKS AT THE CAMBRIDGE UNION**

### **“People still think I've licked the Liberty Bell and have a pair of red cowboy boots”**

On the 9th October 2015, the Cambridge Union Society welcomed actor, writer and director Josh Radnor. The discussion focused around his career, his success on stage, in front of the camera with hit comedy sitcom, *How I Met Your Mother* and behind the camera with *Liberal Arts*.

Sachin Parathalingam, Speaker's Officer, started the discussion with a question about Broadway and his decision to move into it after a long stint in television. Josh Radnor replied that part of his decision was motivated by the fact that his character in *Disgrace* was "distinctly un-Mosby-ish" and to fight "to get people to think about me in another way." He added that "if you do TV, it's like being able to play the piano but only being allowed to play a few keys" and that it was not "everything you want artistically." About the play, he said that he wanted "the audience to have an experience", one which they were maybe unfamiliar with.

In a moment of reflection, he mentioned how "it's an interesting paradox, I wouldn't be here without the show" and then joked that his "diamond shoes were too tight" with regards to his comments about being always recognised as Ted Mosby, and people still thinking that "I've licked the Liberty Bell and have a pair of red cowboy boots". He added later that it was part of the beauty of the show because it made people truly care about the characters.

After this, the discussion moved onto to his experiences as a director. For his first film, Josh Radnor stated that "I surrounded myself with people who knew how to do this." While discussing film production, he told the audience of the sequence of his first few days: that on his first "I had no idea what I was doing", on the second "I was still saying things wrong", by the third "getting the hang of things" and on the fourth day "I loved it."

*How I Met Your Mother* was the next topic to be tackled with Josh Radnor answering a question about the finale of the series which aired just over a year ago. "It's always hard to end a beloved show" he started, "you need to study it, there's more depth to it, like [Ted Mosby's] obsession with the one". Commenting on the fact that there was such a mixed reaction to the show, he explained it by saying that "it just goes to show how much people cared about the show and its characters."

Questions were then accepted from the audience, one of which asking about his relationship with the character of Ted Mosby. Josh replied that the advice he got was "to imagine a door, and that is the door to the character which you can step into, or out of" which helped him through years on the set of the show. Additionally he mentioned that he found it "a little hard at times" because talking about intellectual matters is something that is "made fun of in the show", and it is "something I actually like".

The final question was about his moments in filming *How I Met Your Mother*. Josh Radnor remembered his times filming outside, describing it as "old timey Hollywood" and thinking "I've made it." He referenced the "morning and bed scenes" where they would film in their pyjamas. This was before he recounted that in "post-coital" scenes with Cobie Smulders (Robyn in the show) would "tell me exactly what we had just done" and that she has "a disgusting mind", soliciting howls of laughter and applause from the audience.

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For footage of the event go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/cambridgeunionsoc>