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Profile

Benedict Taylor has had an extraordinary career as an actor and producer spanning more than four decades in the entertainment business.

Born on April 18th, 1960 in Hampstead, London, the son of BBC documentary features producer Richard Taylor and writer & musician Allegra Taylor. His father was the son of a traditional English farming family and his mother descended from a Polish, Jewish refugee father and a Protestant English mother. Benedict has five brothers and sisters, 3 of them adopted. Throughout their childhood they were immersed in filmmaking, arts and music leading nearly all of them to develop careers in the creative industries.

Benedict made his debut as an actor at the age of nine at the Aldwych Theatre in London with the Royal Shakespeare Company as Mamillius in 'A Winter's Tale' starring Judy Dench. He continued to work with the company throughout the 1970s, appearing in productions both in London and Stratford. This was the golden age of the Royal Shakespeare Company; the era of some of their finest productions, with legendary directors like John Barton, Peter Hall and Trevor Nunn at the helm.

His first proper film role was in the 1974 feature film 'The Turn of the Screw' but his film career really took off when he starred alongside Bette Davis in Walt Disney's 'A Watcher in the Woods' in 1980 and the lead role in 'Barriers' a long running, award winning TV series for British ITV company Tyne-Tees and Germany's ZDF.

Throughout the 80s and 90s Benedict worked predominantly on UK & international film and TV projects but kept his passion for theatre alive with several UK tours and a stint at Covent Garden's Donmar Warehouse while Sam Mendes was artistic director.

Benedict and his wife Kate, a video and film editor, met in their 20s. They have two daughters, Freya, born in 1996 and Kalila born in 1998. He also has a son, Jay, born in 1981, from an earlier relationship with Marinka Watts. He took a break from theatre touring and location filming while his children were in their early years, concentrating on projects that allowed him to be close to his family. During this time he developed and produced a mix of various festival style music event projects and documentary films.

He continues to perform, produce and direct across a variety of creative platforms.

Education

Working as a child actor led to an erratic education at various state and private schools. Started working full time at 16 but later studied several courses covering Art, Psychology, Theology, Maths & Physics - with a particular emphasis on consciousness studies and science.

Actor and voice artist

Movies

The Laura Marlin Mysteries: 'Dead Man's Cove', A Watcher in the Woods (2016 version), Hippopotamus, Breathe, Notes on a Scandal, Perfect Life, Star Wars Episode 1 – The Phantom Menace, Young Indiana Jones: Adventures in the Secret Service, Monk Dawson, Sharpe's Regiment, Thirteen at Dinner, Duel of Hearts, Every Time We Say Goodbye, The Black Arrow, The Watcher in the Woods and Turn of the Screw

TV

Unforgotten, Gone, Breathe, Wallander, Trial & Retribution, A & E, When Hitler Invaded Britain, Murder In Suburbia, Murder Investigation Team, Doctors, The 10 Percenters, A Palace Divided, Jewels, Darling Buds of May, A Perfect Spy, Vanity Fair, Behind Enemy Lines, Thirteen at Dinner, The Last Days of Pompeii, The Far Pavilions, Beau Geste, Barriers, Bergerac and Tales of the Unexpected.

Theatre

Good (Donmar Warehouse), Dario Fo - Abducting Diana, The Importance of Being Ernest, London Assurance, Peter Pan, King John, Macbeth, The Man of Mode and A Winters Tale.

Documentary voice-over

Cecilia Bartoli, Breaking into Tesco, The British Open Golf Championship Official Film 2005, 2006, 2007, Biopics on Seve Ballesteros, Gary Player & Jack Niclaus. 'The British Empire In Colour' and the official film for Wimbledon 2007.

Commercial voice-over

The London Mayorial candidate selection 2008, Skoda, RSPCA, Saga Insurance, First Class Mortgages and Bud Light.

Continuity voice-over

Sky, CNN and Five.

Corporate voice-over

Visa, the London Olympic Bid, British Energy, Whitbread, Heineken, Redstone Communications, Western Homes, FIFA, British Gas, Yorkshire Electricity, BT, Cable & Wireless, Kingfisher, Longmans, Legal & General, Moneyextra.com, Royal Bank of Scotland, Royal Mail, Rover Cars, and Microsoft.

Documentary Film Production

Director - HoH Film, Co-director - Orpheus Productions

In parallel to a successful acting career Ben worked with his father, BBC documentary features producer, Richard Taylor on several independent productions for their production company Orpheus Films, notably: '*To Be Alone*' an award winning investigation into the plight of refugees in Europe and '*First Years*' an intimate portrait of life in remote rural communities in Kenya, focussing on childbirth and early-years care, both for the UN.

His interest in theology led to films investigating comparative religious and secular opinion, particularly: '*Voices from Kashmir: Jihad, Sufism & Islam – A path out of conflict?*'

After decades of violence, a new, cautious optimism for peace in Kashmir had emerged in Kashmir. The film focuses on the idea that a Sufi approach to Islam could offer potential for the future.

'The Divan of Rumi & Bach'

An exploration of the parallels between ancient & modern world music and sacred music from eastern and western traditions, fusing Iranian classical music and Bach with beautiful singing from Sufi Master Davod Azad and the spoken poetry of Jalaluddin Rumi.

With Hugh Thomson, he made the recent highly acclaimed three part BBC4 series '*Treasures of the Indus*' A story of the Indian Sub Continent told through the treasures and architecture of three very different people, places and dynasties that have shaped the modern Indian world.

Films include:

‘Treasures of the Indus’ - 3 part, landmark series for BBC4

The Indian Subcontinent. romantic, remote and mysterious. From the plains of Pakistan to the foothills of the Himalaya, from Northern India and Rajasthan to the deep South and Tamil Nadu. This vast melting pot of diverse civilisations, religions, cultures and glorious landscapes has also given us some of the greatest artistic golden ages on earth. This is the story of the Indian Sub Continent told through the treasures of three very different people, places and dynasties that have shaped the modern Indian world.

‘Voices from Kashmir: Jihad, Sufism & Islam – A path out of conflict?’

After decades of violence a new, cautious optimism for peace in Kashmir has emerged. The film explores the idea that maybe a Sufi approach to Islam can offer potential for the future. Amid the clamour for control between the mighty forces of India and Pakistan and the shrill cry of extremism there is the subtle voice of old Kashmir. A voice that once helped guide the people of this ancient Kingdom to embrace the beliefs of others and create a paradise on earth. Ben travelled to Jammu & Kashmir and was allowed exclusive access to a fascinating and diverse collection of influential political & religious leaders and some of the provinces most highly respected artists. After decades of violence he found many people keen to talk about their hopes for the future and to place those hopes in the context of Kashmir’s historical reputation for tolerance and inclusiveness. Particularly interesting was how deeply it was felt that a Sufi approach to Islam offered such great potential for the future. Many expressed a deep desire for peace, a hope that India and Pakistan could somehow find a negotiated settlement and develop a timetable for resolution, and a yearning for the voice of Kashmiri people to be heard.

‘The Divan of Rumi & Bach’ - In collaboration with The British Council

A profile of the development and performance of a unique musical collaboration with **Davod Azad, Matthew Barley, Sirishkumar & Igor Kennaway**. A musical exploration of the parallels between ancient & modern world music and sacred music from eastern and western traditions, fusing Iranian classical music and Bach with beautiful singing from Sufi Master **Davod Azad** and the spoken poetry of **Jalaluddin Rumi**.

‘To Be Alone’ - for the UNHCR

An award winning investigation into the plight of refugees in Europe,

‘First Years’ - also for the UN

An intimate portrait of life in remote rural communities in Kenya, focussing on childbirth and early-years care.

‘Skull Beneath the Skin - a requiem for 9/11’

Reflections from poet Damian Gorman; “We know the journalistic story of 9/11. We know all too well what happened on that day. But what we need to be reconnected with is the emotion. What happened to us all just in watching those horrific events unfold - to the way we think about the world, about good, about evil.”

‘The Peasant Girl’

Profile of Violinist Victoria Mullova & Cellist Matthew Barley

‘Feeding China’

Special report into Chinese farming methods. The team travelled to all corners of the country looking at the food production process from field & factory to slaughter & packaging and eventually to market.

Event Production

Director House of Honey - Producer, Artistic Director, Production Manager, Event Consultant

For over twenty years **House of Honey** have been creating intimate events in beautiful and interesting locations. It has nurtured an intimate, cohesive membership that stands at around 15,000 many of whom are at the heart of the arts, media, business, law, health and education. The care put into developing this database and developing a feeling of community is one of its greatest strengths. The London based events usually draw between 500 to 1000 guests and the small festival style gatherings usually around 3000. Guests are invited by personal email with eTickets available only through the HoH website. The main membership age range is between 25-55, also included however are many families with teens or toddlers and several venerable older guests.

HoH started hosting **GIVE!** at The Fortress in Kings Cross and **Woy-Oy** on the MV Cam Leopard at Chelsea Bridge in the late 80s, **Kimberley** in the early 90s and the **House of Honey** parties in the Naughties. They also organize concerts and gigs for the artists they particularly enjoy working with.

- **Christmas & Valentines Parties** (since 2010) Invite only London party events
- **GIVE! Festival** (since 2012) 3 day Music, art and holistic, family friendly, invite only boutique festival
- **Kimberley** (1994 - 2011) Co-hosting and producing the original invite only boutique festival 4 Days of Deluxe camping, Music, fireworks, lasers, aerobatics, Holistic therapies and spa treatments on a small private estate in Norfolk
- **House of Honey - Harvest** (since 2009) 2 days of music and entertainment with fully serviced 5 star camping on the 3000 acre Eridge estate in Sussex
- **B to Z** (2005 - 2010) in association with The Zetter Hotel, Dinner and live music followed by dancing - with chic boutique hotel rooms also available
- **Desert Heart** (2004 - 2011) Production management and data support. A charity fundraising event for Save the Rhino - Namibia annually delivering all revenue (in excess of £10,000) directly to the charity
- **GIVE, Woy Oy and Heart & Soul Parties** (1988 - 1995) Invite only London party events

In collaboration with Peabody Essex Museum - Massachusetts:

PEM invited Ben's event production company HOUSE of HONEY to create a special installation for the opening night of a major new exhibition; **'IMAGINE SOUTH ASIA'**, developing specific animated video content to reflect the exhibition's themes of intersecting cross-cultural union, which was mixed live to a musical soundscape full of Eastern flavours. In the words of museum curator Sona Datta; "The House of Honey collective explores the concept of emergence into morphogenic form and seeks to represent a common source of faith, philosophy, art and science in a playful, immersive environment"

Producer & DJ - as 'Ben the Bee'

Ben has been at the heart of the underground music scene from the early warehouse parties of the 80's to Ibiza, Burning Man & beyond. He's played at dozens of great festivals, clubs & parties all over the world including: Give, Kimberley, Secret Garden Party, Wilderness, Burning Man (USA), Bestival, Woy-Oy, Harvest, Shindig, Thunderpussy, The Whitehouse, Ravenous, Paramount, Koshka, Fly, Aura (Ibiza), The Backyard (Thailand), Tender, Lotus, Cultural Virus, Megatripolis, Pendragon, Sunset Ashram (Ibiza), Seductive Alchemy, The ICA, Rustlers Valley (South Africa), Save the Rhino (Kenya), TIP (Goa), Rift Valley Festival (Kenya), Wajaya Beach (Sri Lanka) and Sunrise (UK) and hosts a radio show and mix streaming service via the House of Honey website.



GIVE! festival

*"At its best art is a channel through which the Mystery is made manifest.
When we connect fully, our response may allow us to journey beyond
intellectual appreciation and discover ourselves transported
to a place where we recognize our essential self, the Divine within us,
reflected back at us in the work as if in a mirror"*