

Adjoa Andoh plays Nurse Colette Kierney



Adjoa always knew she wanted to be an actress but “in my family it wasn’t a thing to do. My mum had got a place at drama school in her twenties, but didn’t go. She was involved with the big movement of drama coming to the North of England in the Sixties and my dad was a journalist, so that whole ‘arty farty’ thing was always knocking about.”

Having already won several awards at school for her acting, Adjoa’s English teacher in the upper sixth got drama instated as a subject for O-Levels. “This was one of the few exams I got an A for.” After passing her A-Levels, Adjoa got a job with Lloyds Bank for a year: “I loved some of the people I was working with but was bored rigid, so applied to do a Law degree at Bristol Polytechnic.”

While studying law, Adjoa joined a black women’s group and started to attend drama and dance classes. “Realising that my law degree

was not what I wanted to do, I packed it in after two years.” After this, Adjoa got acting work in London including with a young theatre company called Theatre Centre, based in Islington. “We did fantastic shows which toured all over the country as well as Canada, US, and Italy. I felt like I was in the right place.”

Adjoa co-wrote and was associate producer for *What My Mother Told Me*, a drama for Channel Four which was filmed here and in Trinidad. She also writes plays for radio and has worked for the RSC, the Lyric Hammersmith, Derby Playhouse, Birmingham Rep, Manchester Contact and The Young Vic, among others.

TV work has included *EastEnders*, *Brass Eye* and various comedies. She ran a theatre company for seven years with her friend Polly Irvine and worked with Stephen Berkoff on *The Murder Of Jesus Christ* before landing the part of Colette in *Casualty*.

Age: 33

Home town: “I was brought up in Gloucestershire but I’ve lived in London longer than anywhere now.”

Similarities with Colette: “She likes being good at what she does and doesn’t suffer fools gladly and that’s like me. I’m much more anarchic than her, please God! I think she’s much more sensible and organised. In the new series she gets sick of being sensible and wants to have more fun.”

Colette’s best and worst traits: “Generally loyalty is one of her best points but this is tested in the new series when Colette finds herself the object of another’s affection. She gets furious with Josh for not remembering their first wedding anniversary and the fact that Simon has been flirting like a demon doesn’t help. I also think she is dependable, has a dry sense of humour and can easily see through people. Negatively, she can be grumpy and a bit sharp. As a boss, she’s a bit like a scary games teacher who you grow to like and have a good time with.”

Adjoa’s real-life *Casualty*: “I’m not particularly accident prone but I did pull my ankle recently on set. We were skipping and doing silly walks between scenes. I’m now supposed to wear this not-very-flattering ankle support. But I’m quite into homeopathy and will always give that a shot before anything else.”

On-screen romance: “Josh is not communicating with Colette and despite her efforts to work on their relationship, he does not respond. As she is really worried about him she shares her concerns with Simon as he has confided in her in the past. and also because he’s a doctor. Colette believes that Josh is seriously ill and not recognising that fact. Relations between Colette and Simon warm up gradually and Colette is tempted to put her marriage in jeopardy.”

Favourite food and music: “I’m really into Thai food. My husband and I went to Thailand for our first wedding anniversary and we are going back for two weeks this summer. I love the food there. I do like cooking, but am best at cooking

puddings, especially sherry trifle and strawberry mousse. I go and see bands whenever I can. I went to an anti-landmine concert recently and saw Steve Earle and Elvis Costello. I love Stevie Wonder, Roberta Flack and Donnie Hathaway, but will always be a punk rocker at heart.”

How do you keep in shape?: “I’m quite strict about my diet and try to keep the carbohydrates down. I’m a member of a local gym and quite like running on the treadmill.”

How do you relax?: “I try to go to the theatre as much as I can. I loved *Jesus Hopped The A Train* which was on in London recently. I really enjoy the cinema and go to jazz sessions at a pub in South London whenever I’m home. I also try to fit in meeting up with my friends and catching up with their news when I’m not at work.”

Did you know?

- Adjoa has worked with a number of other *Holby* faces before joining *Casualty* including: Martina Laird, Hugh Quarshie, Peter de Jersey, Ian Aspinall, Laura Sadler and Siobhan Redmond.
- She wrote the profile for The Tavernier family in *EastEnders*. She wrote in an older daughter in the hope of wangling herself a part, but they changed the role to a son [Clyde]. She eventually got her turn in Albert Square when she was cast as Clyde’s girlfriend.
- Adjoa’s mum went out with the Beatles’ first drummer Pete Best, before meeting her dad.