

Lee Warburton plays Emergency Department Assistant Tony Vincent



Growing up, Lee knew few people who were involved in the acting business. It was due to some of his very good teachers at secondary school that he got his first flavour of it when they sent him off on a week's dancing course. "I initially wasn't impressed with it, thought it all a 'bit girly'. I sulked for the first two days and then fell in love with it." Despite loving it he never considered it as a career and instead went through a number of jobs (polystyrene moulder, factory worker): "I'd also wondered how would someone like me, with my background, get into the business."

But the routine of a regular job just didn't feel fulfilling for him so he left the DHSS filing clerk job, aged 18, and enrolled in a two-year dance foundation course. This allowed him to successfully audition for the London Contemporary Dance School but unfortunately, because he'd trained so hard for it, he had damaged his joints and so failed the medical. A friend encouraged him to audition for drama school but he wasn't successful. A year spent working as an optician in Boots provided him

with renewed determination and finally, aged 21, he got a place at the Welsh College of Music and Drama.

Having done three years there he got a role with a touring opera company at the same time as he got a *Coronation St* audition. "I wrote holiday postcards to casting directors – their secretaries would pass them on as it looked like they were from a friend. I also had a friend who was a director and he got me a meeting with a casting director which helped me pick up tips on getting parts." His hard work paid off when he got cast in *Coronation St*. "I didn't think I'd got it but then they gave me the good news and told me I couldn't tell anyone for a couple of weeks."

He played the role of Tony for 18 months, left for 18 months during which time he did some theatre work, then rejoined again for another three months. Other productions he's appeared in include: *Queer As Folk*, *Bob And Rose*, *Hope And Glory*, *Clocking Off* and *Where The Heart Is*.

Age: “I’m 30 but don’t look it.”

Home town: Glossop, Derbyshire

Similarities with Tony: “This is a character that I’ve brought more of myself to than any other character I’ve played.”

Tony’s best and worst traits: “He is a good and great person in all situations as well as being a good brother and good at his job. I think the only slightly negative thing is his temper and that he rushes in to things. His lack of self-confidence is endearing though not necessarily a bad thing.”

Lee’s real-life *Casualty*: “Well, I haven’t managed to top my accident in the Brecon Beacons last year when I fell over the edge of a cliff. But I’m pretty accident prone and covered in bruises most days.”

On-screen romance: “Tony must have been taking some kind of passion-killing drug for the past year as he has had no sex life at all! He liked Dillon but knew all along that he wasn’t gay. Tony certainly enjoyed winding him up though and only came on to him at a dizzy moment. I don’t think Dillon has enough machismo for Tony!”

Favourite food and music: “I’m into all sorts of music. I’ve been introduced to Roberta Flack and Donnie Hathaway recently by Martina and Kwame and Craig Armstrong’s [composed soundtrack to *Moulin Rouge*] new album is excellent. Thai food is my favourite as it’s healthy, tasty and it also has a philosophy of balance behind it.”

How do you keep in shape?: “I’ve recently trained hard for a marathon in Norway but my greatest health tip is to drink lots of water. I also believe that everything in moderation works well but plenty of partying is also quite important.”

How do you relax? “I listen to music. I’d do that from dawn to dusk if it was possible.”

Did you know?

- Lee made polystyrene moulds for motorways.
- He recently went to Thailand with Dan where they went trekking, stayed with hill tribes, went bamboo rafting and rode elephants. While on trek their guide caught a snake which they ate later in a stew.