

By Hackney Wow Cubs Alma Harrison and Hiba Ishtiyag
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Meeting Sarah from Horrible Histories



Actress Sarah Hadland, Hackney Wow reporters Hiba and Alma with writer Catherine Johnson at Dalston CLR James Library

Hiba: What inspired you to be an actress?

Sarah Hadland: Well, I used to read an awful lot when I was a little girl, I absolutely loved books and I think that's what got my imagination going. Often I would read a book and my friends and I would act out things that had happened in the book and make up our own adventures. Looking back now, that was something that definitely got me started. I enjoyed making up stories and pretending I was different characters. Then that became my job, so I was very lucky.

Alma: How long have you been working on Horrible Histories?

Sarah Hadland: I think the first series was five or six years ago. I was very excited about it because it was very different to anything that I had done before. It appealed to me as it was set in so many different time periods and the scripts were really funny. I liked the fact that it didn't talk down to children and it appeals to both adults and children.

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Hiba: How old were you when you started acting?

Sarah Hadland: My first job was when I was 19, I did a musical show called 'Cats' in the West End.

Alma: What's your favourite historical period and why?

Sarah Hadland: I do love the Egyptians. I love the big, shiny, glossy, black wigs and the fabulous makeup. I also really like the Georgian period, because of the fantastic clothes they wore and I love the huge dresses. I wouldn't like to live in that time now because for women it would be difficult to move around quickly with the huge dresses and big hair. But I liked being filmed in it.

Hiba: Which is your favourite Horrible Histories episode?

Sarah Hadland: That's impossible. I don't think I can choose. I do love the songs, I think they do them really well. I love the boys with the airplane pilots, that was a little bit like 'Take That'. I thought that was brilliant, it really made me laugh. It was just like a pop video.

Alma: If you could be any character who would you be?

Sarah Hadland: Cleopatra. She looked fabulous and she was also a very powerful woman. In that time in history to be so powerful is pretty special.

Hiba: Who do you like playing?

Sarah Hadland: I like to play lots of different characters and that's what was so great about Horrible Histories. One minute you're playing a peasant with short hair looking grubby and the next minute I'll be playing Nefertiti, Cleopatra or a Georgian Queen. I like the different looks and periods of history, the variety appealed the most.



Alma: Did you play Queen Elizabeth in Terrible Tudors?

Sarah Hadland: No, she was played by Martha Howard Douglas. She did the brilliant song with Henry VIII in the maze. I have played Queen Victoria a few times and I was Queen Mary and did a song inspired by Kate Bush. That was good fun.

Hiba: Which period was most gruesome?

Sarah Hadland: I think each period has its own little selection of gore. Maybe the further back you go, the gorier it was.

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