

Matthew Grant Godbey plays our favorite recurring LAPD Detective Dan Evans on *NCIS Los Angeles*....after Marty Deeks that is! Godbey has guest starred in three of the most popular fan favorite episodes *Blye K*, *Stand Off* and *Missing*. He returns this year for the 100th episode, *Reznikov, N.* to reprise his role as Detective Evans working alongside Chris O'Donnell and LL Cool J. I had a chance to talk with Matthew about his varied career as an actor, writer and filmmaker. As with most creative people, it's no surprise that he has other creative talents especially as an accomplished painter who has had his paintings shown in galleries in Los Angeles, New York and Amsterdam. Matthew always has a great time returning to the set of *NCISLA* and we got a chance to find out more about his career and his time spent on set with the cast and crew. Welcome Matthew to the *NCISLA* familia!

It seems your creativity has no boundaries and you wear many hats: actor, producer, writer, designer, and artist. Is there one area where you began your artistic journey?

I was always an artist. I had that talent from as long as I can remember as far as being a painter and drawing. I always thought that was what I was going to be from an early age. I'm from Cincinnati and locally I dabbled in acting and modeling as something fun on the side. I got a late start in acting professionally because of working locally but I started to do some theatre for fun and fell in love with the collaborative aspect of art whereas the painter works alone in a studio and it's kind of a lonesome pursuit. I still do both and I'm very serious about both but I really enjoy getting out of the studio and collaborating with other people. I was probably close to 30 before I considered myself a professional actor or a union actor.

Do you wear a lot of those hats at the same time or do you go in phases?

I go in phases because it just depends on what I have going on and this year is a perfect example. I had an art show was running through most of last year and into 2013 and then I booked a couple of acting gigs and my show closed down as well and then all of a sudden I got some commissioned art work to do and so I was involved in that very heavily. After I finished this work I went back to the acting. I did a film and then this episode and had done a short film and now I started taking it to some festivals and got into the producing side of things. I get consumed with one thing at a time but I jump back and forth.

What area do you enjoy the most?

I find acting the most enjoyable. It's play to me....especially after I studied the craft and I knew what I was doing and I wasn't out there guessing. At that point it becomes freedom to play. I do my work prior and then when I'm on set it becomes play time. I enjoy the acting process. In terms of producing the reward factor is very high because it is the most difficult thing that I do. It's rewarding to see something through and it's a pretty cool accomplishment and it's a collaborative art and get to feel a satisfaction of working together with other people.

Your art work is very striking....I love your use of color. How did you develop your style?

I think it just came from thousands of hours in the studio; it just came to discover my style through accident and experimentation. I think I started the style I've become known for around the late 1990's and stuck with it and trying to push it to its limits.



@Jacqueline Nivens

Let's put on your actor hat.... You are returning as Dan Evans in a recurring role that spans over 5 episodes since season two. Other than the stars of the show, this is a rare occurrence. What changes have you seen over the course of the show?

The biggest thing I've seen from my limited time on set is the friendships and relationships between the characters and the show not primarily focusing on the procedure at hand of catching the bad guys. These relationships of these main characters have developed and their love for one another. There is so much more humor involved in the show today than there was five years ago. I'm also happy to be involved in the 100th episode that Shane (Brennan) wrote which made me feel very grateful and very proud that he chose me to be in his episode and it was an honor.

It must have been very electric on set for this episode?

Everybody was excited and in a good mood. They had a party with cake and even at the read through there was so much excitement and the most applause I ever heard at a read through. Everybody was definitely excited and excited that Shane wrote it. It really does come from the top down because he is such a great creator and leader of his people and makes everybody feel appreciated and part of a family.

What's it like working on the NCISLA set?

It's definitely more of a family atmosphere. People are not running to their trailer between takes or opening a book or their iPad. They talk.... they joke. Chris and LL are constantly cutting on one another and having a good time. Those two get a kick out of rousing one another and it's just a really loving, fun atmosphere. They make everyone feel welcome. It's the type of thing that makes you want to be in the industry and a part of it.



@Jacqueline Nivens

Can you talk a little about what your character will be doing in his return and do you have any stories you can share?

I'm a liaison getting to the crime scene which is usually the case, prior to the NCIS crew and so I'm briefing them prior to what's going on before them going in the crime scene. Sometimes, there are more personal things going on like in a past episode Deeks and I have a history and I'm telling him it's not a good idea and he threatens me because he apparently saw me messing around with the chief's daughter. So he kind of blackmailed me into having access. So sometimes it's more involved and sometimes it's letting them know

what took place, informational wise.

This time I'm in the scene working with Miguel and Todd but I have heard rumors they want to delve into Deeks' past with the LAPD and there may be stuff coming up that involves me with that. I think it would be a good avenue to explore in regards to his past and find out how he came to this point today.

We don't get to talk much about Miguel Ferrer, what was it like working with him? I hear he is a very sweet guy.

He is so sweet and we talked forever. I know his cousin George Clooney too. He use to visit Cincinnati all the time and I'm from there. He use to spend a lot of his childhood in Cincinnati and still has relatives there.

We also have memories of Coney Island and of the amusement park and going to the racetrack and we talked forever about it. He was a joy to work with, a very nice, pleasant person.

I was standing there with Miguel, Todd and Chris, getting ready to do a scene and Chris walks up to Miguel and says, "*Please just don't look me in the eye.*" And I said to Chris, "*What about me?*" And he said, "*You just can't talk to me!*" He was playing the super star, who demands only green M&Ms....he was playing the diva with all of us so it was kind of funny.

I spent time with Chris and Todd, Eric, Daniela and Renee and all of them socially. They are all so easy to get along with because I have hung out with them socially on more than one occasion and they are just terrific and love to joke around like that and they are fun, good people who help create a great atmosphere, who Shane, from the top down creates as well. Chris and Todd are so present with you they are so engaged with you. I told one of the crew members that you need to appreciate this because this is one of the best atmospheres you may ever have on a television show. Chris and Todd, who are the number one and two people on the set are just such good, genuine people to work with in the business.

What was it like working with the director, Tony Warmby?

Tony is very warm, easygoing. He's very precise with his direction. Nothing was abstract and I could tell exactly what he wanted. He would give you direction in a very personal manner which makes you feel special and a part of it all and he knows what he wants. He's talented and has been around the block. He's a pro and things just go so quickly because he knows what he wants and he gets it right away.

Tell us about *Blood Moon*? Is it still being shown at festivals?

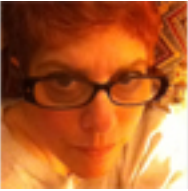
Yes, I'll probably continue making the round of festivals for the remainder of this year. It's a very dark film about this normal guy and his transformation. His wife and son have been abducted by a serial killer and he is frustrated with the police and he decides to start looking for the killer himself. He comes across other serial killers and starts to kill them the same way he is killing their victims. So it's all about his transformation and can you turn the good guy into the bad guy and do circumstances cause that? It's a 30 minute film and Linda Hunt narrates in the beginning of the film. I'd also like to do a feature version from the short.

What's up next for you?

I just did a film a few months ago that I can't talk about yet. But I'm auditioning and getting ready to go back into the studio and do some painting. I'm looking into do a show. I visited some galleries in Los Angeles, Chicago and I'm looking in New York. Probably early next year, February or March.

A big thank you goes out to Matthew for joining us to talk about his time on set. We had a fun talk and really look forward to his return on the 100th episode again as Dan Evans!

You can find out more about Matthew by visiting his web site: <http://matthewgodbey.com>, or IMDB page. He's also on Twitter: @MatthewGodbey



Exclusive Interview
for NCISLA Magazine
by Diane Volpe